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What the Children Are Reading: A Content Analysis of Minority Male Characters in Preschool Children's Libraries

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WHAT THE CHILDREN ARE READING: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF MINORITY
MALE CHARACTERS IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S LIBRARIES

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by

Joan Katrina Mann-Boykin

August 2016

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Title: WHAT THE CHILDREN ARE READING: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF
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Advisor: Susan Korach, Ed.D.
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Abstract

Many early childhood classroom environments have a library area, which has

picture books for the children to explore and enjoy, and some early childhood classrooms

put tubs or baskets of a few picture books in every center in the classroom. In addition to

inspiring a love of reading and providing hours of enjoyment, children's literature serves

emotional, social, intellectual, linguistic and literary purposes (Temple, Martinez, Yokota

& Naylor, 2002).   A primary goal in early childhood programs is to welcome and

embrace the diversity of children and families in today's multicultural society (Brinson,

2012) and children's books provide a wonderful way for children to learn about diversity

and fairness (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2012).   Children's literature presents gender

roles and culture norms to readers that are overt and underlying within the story (Rodman

& Hildreth, 2002). Exposure to picture and story books that challenge historically

limiting gender roles and cultural norms counteract stereotypes that could have harmful

effects on cognitive, social, and gender development of young students. (Hamilton,

Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2010).

The purpose of this study was to explore representation and depiction of male

characters of color in children's picture books within early childhood classrooms

libraries.   Ten early childhood classroom libraries were inventoried and picture books

with males of color were analyzed using a framework for the critical analysis of multicultural children's literature (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). This study had three levels of analysis of classroom libraries: classroom demographics and teacher perceptions, inventory of classroom libraries, and critical content analysis of the role and representation of male characters of color.

Findings revealed that director and teacher perceptions impact the composition of classroom libraries, and that they are more aware of the need for books featuring non-White characters than they are aware of the need for picture books with male characters. The representation of males of color aligns with dominant cultural values and traditional roles for boys, and some ethnicities are portrayed through a native cultural lens. Picture books typically consist of one racial or ethnic group and the non-White characters are often seen as representations of ethnic cultural information. This study suggests a need for school leaders to pay attention to the composition of classroom libraries related to racial/ethnic and gender diversity represented in classroom libraries. Teachers would also benefit from professional development regarding how to build a classroom library that exposes young children, especially boys, to racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.

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Lastly, I'd like to dedicate this dissertation to Noah Horace Mann III Ph.D., who left this world to soon. You were the first in our generation of cousins to get your Ph.D. and I am the second in our family to get my Ph.D. which is by far my greatest academic accomplishment.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Early learning benefits all children. Children from all ethnic, racial and economic backgrounds benefit from high-quality early childhood education (Barnett, Brown & Shore, 2004). High-quality early education increases the early reading and math skills in all children. The effects are somewhat greater for disadvantaged children (Barnett, Brown & Shore, 2004). Universal pre-kindergarten has been found to improve the school readiness skills of children from all economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds (Barnett, Brown & Shore, 2004).

"The achievement gap can be considerably minimized with exposure to high-quality pre-kindergarten". (Haskins & Rouse, 2005 p. 4). The achievement gap refers to a significant disparity in educational success between groups of children: low-income and minority children as compared to higher-income and non-minority children (Haskins & Rouse, 2005, p. 5). Current educational policy has focused on efforts in K-12 education to alleviate the achievement gap, such as high curriculum standards, reduced class sizes, higher teacher quality, and test-based accountability; however, the achievement gap persists (Haskins & Rouse, 2005, p. 4). The achievement gap that exists in kindergarten tends to widen through the school years: young children who enter school behind their peers are unlikely to ever catch up, resulting in a persistent "achievement gap". (Coley, 2001).

High quality preschool education can enhance cognitive and social development with long-term benefits for later success in school, the economy, and society (Barnett, 2008; 2011; Yoshikawa et al, 2014).

Diversity and Student Achievement: Race and Ethnicity

Responding to the needs of an increasingly diverse student population is both a great opportunity and a great challenge for educators. Due to the increase in diversity, early education (EE) teachers need the skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to create culturally responsive classrooms (Purnell, Ali, Begum and Carter, 2007).

Teachers in culturally responsive classrooms strive to become knowledgeable about the cultures and communities in which their students live (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). They acknowledge the legitimacy of different ways of speaking and interacting. Although they recognize that White, dominant culture norms define what is appropriate and valued in our schools, they understand that this status comes from the power of White, dominant culture rather than from any inherent superiority (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Moreover, they explicitly teach their students these mainstream ways, so that students can use them (if they wish) to succeed in dominant social spheres (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Ladson-Billings & Tate (1995) states that access to a high quality, rigorous curriculum, has been almost exclusively enjoyed by White students. Schools have been re-segregated through such methods as tracking or placing students into specific courses or programs; honor classes, advanced placement courses and/or gifted programs, for

example (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The formal ways that selection and admission into these programs are conducted guarantee that students of color have limited access to high quality curriculum or, one that will prepare them for college attendance (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). According to Delgado & Stefancic (2000), Critical Race Theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship between race, racism, and power. The movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discuss, but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, context, group- and self-interest, and even feelings and the unconscious (Delgado & Stefancic, 2002).

According to Delgado (1995), Critical Race Theory (CRT) made a presence in the 1970's with the work of Bell, African American/Black, and Freeman, White, both of whom were deeply distressed over the slow pace of the racial reform in the United States. They argued that the traditional approaches of filing *amicus* briefs, conducting protests and marches, and appealing to the moral sensibilities of decent citizens, produced smaller and fewer gains than in previous times (Delgado, 1995). Before long Bell and Freeman were being joined by other legal scholars who shared their views with traditional civil rights strategies. CRT begins with the notion that racism is "normal, not aberrant, in American society" (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv), and, because it is so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture. Even though CRT has been largely used in the area of legal research (e.g., Crenshaw, 1995), its influence has expanded into other disciplines including education. Ladson-Billings &

Tate (1995) can be credited with introducing CRT to education over 20 years ago. Now, CRT serves a powerful theoretical and analytical framework within educational research (Duncan, 2002; Lynn, Yosso, Solorzano, & Parker, 2002).

An essential tenet of CRT is counter-storytelling (Matsuda, 1995). Counter-storytelling has been an essential feature of educational research that employed a CRT framework. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) define counter-storytelling as a method of telling a story that "aims to cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths, especially ones held by the majority" (p. 144). Counter-storytelling is a means of exposing and critiquing normalized dialogues that perpetuate racial stereotypes. The use of counter-stories allows for the challenging of privileged discourses, the discourses of the majority, therefore, serving as a means for giving a voice to marginalized groups. In other words, counter-storytelling "help[s] us understand what life is like for others, and invite[s] the reader into a new and unfamiliar world" (Delgado & Stefancic, p. 41). In the educational arena, Solorzano and Yasso (2002) suggest that counter-stories can be found in various forms, including personal stories/narratives, and composite stories/narratives. Classroom materials like picture books articulate cultural and social norms to a young child and classroom libraries offer a platform to expose children to counter stories.

Impact of Children's Picture Books

Children's picture books act as a mirror, reflecting and validating the students' gender and cultural identity (Cox & Galda, 1990). For children of color from diverse backgrounds, these stories are windows into a new realm of experiences (Cox & Galda,

1990). Multicultural literature depicts all types of cultures, which include race, gender, religion, language, socioeconomic class, and ethnicity and provide the opportunity to open the child's mind to lifestyles that are different from their own (Katz, 2003). Children begin the journey of self-awareness at a young age, which includes understanding differences within ethnic groups (Katz, 2003). Picture books that depict a variety of ethnic, racial and cultural groups within the United States' (US) society allow young children opportunities to develop their understandings of others while affirming children of diverse backgrounds (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Therefore, children are exposed to various cultures and stereotypes as they are presented to them in picture books (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Most children are not exposed to culture and its meaning (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

Gender and Student Achievement

The classroom library should be enticing for both boys and girls. Most young boys enter preschool with a willingness to read. However, many boys who enter these classrooms so full of enthusiasm in the beginning of the school year soon lose this eagerness because they begin to believe that the reading they are being asked to complete is boring and fails to connect with their interests and needs (Zambo & Bronzo, 2009). Lever-Chain (2008) found that for some boys, reading had "become a school task associated with standards… to be met" (p.89) and that they quickly disengaged when the reading curriculum did not align with their interests.   The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (Snyder & Dillow, 2012) disclosed that in every state of the US girls

are consistently outperforming boys in reading assessments at all levels tested. Whitmire (2006) found boys were 50% more likely to be retained in elementary school than girls.

Since 1981, when the U.S. Department of Education began keeping statistics on student performance by gender, we have seen that boys lag behind girls in most categories. The 2000 National Assessment of Educational Progress finds boys one and one-half years behind girls in reading/writing (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000). Girls are now only negligibly behind boys in math and science, areas in which boys have historically outperformed girls (Conlin, 2003). Our boys are now losing frightening ground in school. The following statistics for the United States illustrate these concerns:

- Boys earn 70% of *Ds* and *Fs* and fewer than 50% of *As.*

- Boys account for two-thirds of learning disability diagnoses.

- Boys represent 90% of discipline referrals.

- Boys dominate such brain-related disorders as ADD/ADHD, with millions now medicated in schools.

- Eighty percent of high school dropouts are male. (Conlin, 2003, p. 3).

In high school, the retention rate for boys was about 10 percentage points higher than for girls (Synder & Dillow, 2010) and the retention gap was even larger for minority males. Males make up fewer than 40% of college students (Gurian, Henley, & Trueman, 2001). The Council of Great City Schools released a study from a committee of leaders representing the nation's largest urban school districts, brought attention to the state of

the Black male student in the United States (Lewis, Simon, Uzzell, Horwitz & Casserly, 2010). According to this study, 12% of Black fourth-grade boys were proficient in reading, compared with 38% of White boys. The NCES report found that the dropout rates in high school had decreased from 10 years before, the 5% dropout rate for minorities was more than twice the 2% rate for White students (Chapman, Laird & KewalRamani, 2010).

Implications for Schools

Tyre (2008) explained, "Our expectations for our children have been ramped up but the psychological and physical development of our children has remained about the same" (p. 1). Referencing a report by the National Center for Health Statistics, Tyre continued, "…and what this government study now shows – is that the ones who can't handle it [changing academic expectations] are disproportionately boys" (p. 1).

Our school systems and their teaching staff who work with children who are learning to read have begun to acknowledge the gender gap in literacy and the need to find ways to help all children, especially boys, become better readers. The goal is for all children to be better readers and to enjoy reading for entertainment and knowledge.

> "This said, because boys are so far behind in reading and writing right now, the most substantial pressure at all levels (local and federal) ought to expand…to improvement in boys reading scores… We are damaging a generation as we neglect the tragic reading and writing gap" (Gurian, Henley, & Trueman, 2001, p. 59).

Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young (2006) explored sexism in top selling picture books from 2001 and a seven year sample of Caldecott award-winning books.

They discovered that male characters were present in illustrations and titles 53% more times than female characters were.

Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young (2006) also noted that female main characters were more often portrayed indoors than outdoors; and the reverse was true for male characters. Female characters were often portrayed as passive, rescued by another character, and are nurturing or caring more often than male characters (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2006). Male characters were portrayed as active, rescue other characters, and are assertive or aggressive more than female characters (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2006). Occupations were analyzed and the researchers found that both female and male adults' occupations were traditional and non-traditional (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2006). "Of 23 female characters shown with an occupation, 21 had stereotypically/feminine occupations and only two had non-traditional occupations" (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2006, p. 761). The same was shown for male occupations where out of 33 cases, only four had non-traditional occupations. In this more recent study of gender in children's picture books, female characters were under-represented (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2006). Their data represented both prize-winning books and popular children's books, (Hamilton, Anderson Broaddus & Young, 2006).

Statement of Problem

Lynch (2008), states that children as young as four – six years of age comprehend narratives and their causal structure. Children are able to recall central features of stories

as well as answer specific questions about narratives, even of stories that are somewhat long and complex. When children are able to process and recall stories, then stories transmit knowledge. Classroom books that challenge historically limiting gender roles and cultural norms counteract stereotypes can have positive effects on cognitive, social, and gender development of young students (Hamilton, Anderson, Broaddus & Young, 2010). Children's literature is increasingly more reflective of diverse cultures and gender roles, but how are these diverse books incorporated in classroom libraries?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the representation and depiction of males of color in children's picture books within early childhood classrooms libraries. Multicultural literature can be used as a tool to engage the children and offer a view of diversity in picture books filled with characters from other ethnic groups (Canales, Lucido & Salas, 2002). In particular, multicultural literature offers minority children opportunities to see themselves in the materials they read (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). When children experience books that show unfamiliar people dealing with issues or emotions they can identify with, they are able to relate to the characters and begin to gain a sense of common humanity (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). The study examined the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in children's literature within the early childhood classroom. This study also explored how boys of color were represented as characters in children's literature. This analysis included the depiction of role, as well

as cultural, racial, and ethnic representations. The perceptions of teachers and teacher and classroom demographics were included.

Research Questions

 The following questions were posed:

RQ1:   What is the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in children's literature within early childhood classrooms?

RQ2:   What is the representation and depiction of males of color in children's picture books?

Limitations

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how early childhood classroom libraries represent and depict males of color. The experiences of the participating classrooms may not be representative of a broader classroom sample. Not all children's books were the same in all early education classrooms explored; both the quality and quantity of books varied. The experiences of students in the classroom may not be representative of all students. The study was limited to one urban county in Colorado. Ten early education classrooms participated and the results cannot be generalized to other school districts, early learning centers in other counties, or students in other public schools, private schools, or those who are home schooled.

Summary

Multicultural literature helps children of all minority groups understand and relate to people of diverse backgrounds (Butler, 2006). These books authentically depict and

interpret students' lives and history, build self-respect, encourage the development of positive values, make children aware of their strengths, and leave them with a sense of hope and direction (Greenfield, 1995). Quality multicultural children's literature enables children "to see themselves and others in a realistic environment and perhaps help them develop tolerance toward others from different backgrounds" (Butler, 2006, p. 81).

Reading skills in kindergarten and first grade are often significant predictors of later reading skills, and are also associated with the rate of change in reading skill (Butler, Marsh, Sheppard & Sheppard, 1985; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Schatschneider, Fletcher, Francis, Carlson & Foorman, 2004; Wagner & Torgesen, 1987). Growth in reading skills for young children has been found to be fastest during the early grades, and relatively slower after third grade (Foorman, Francis, Fletcher, Schatschneider, & Mehta, 1998). The study examined the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in children's picture books within the early childhood classroom. The study explored how males of color were represented as characters in children's literature through their roles and racial/ethnic lenses. The study also compared the racial, ethnic, and gender relationships between the picture books data and the children in the classroom.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

High quality preschool education can enhance cognitive and social development with long-term benefits for later success in school, the economy, and society (Barnett, 2008; 2011; Yoshikawa et al, 2014). Culture and gender are significant aspects of identity development. This literature review presents research and theory about children's literature and student achievement and social development, multicultural education; multicultural children's literature; and the portrayal of African-American/Black, Latino, Asian-American, Native American/American Indian and male characters in children's literature.

Importance of Early Literacy

One of the most persuasive rationales for sharing literature with young children is that it benefits language and literacy development (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). For years, researchers, teacher educators, parent educators, and parents have recognized the value of reading to children, and numerous studies document the beneficial effects of reading to preschool children (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994). Wells's study (1985), an examination of the correlation of the effects of picture book reading, found that the frequency of listening to stories between the ages of one and three years was significantly associated with literacy and oral language skills as measured at age five by the children's teachers. When teachers read books with young children, they offer, among other things,

exposure to ways of thinking about other human beings. For the child, illustrations and text combine to create particular views of individuals as well as groups of people – complete with messages about what those people are like (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

The achievement gap, often first measured in elementary schools, begins well before students reach kindergarten as a 'school readiness gap'. A variety of tests at kindergarten entry provide evidence of such a gap, including the U.S. Department of Education's Early Childhood Longitudinal Survey of Kindergarten children (ECLS-K) (Rouse, Brooks-Gunn & McLanahan, 2005, Rock and Stenner, 2005). This early disparity in performance is critical, since once students are behind, they do not catch up (Duncan, 2007). Children who score poorly on tests of cognitive skills before kindergarten are highly likely to be low performers throughout their school careers. (Duncan, 2007).

Minority students and those with low socioeconomic status have disproportionately less access to high quality early childhood education, which has been shown to have a strong impact on early learning and development (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005). Black children may be more likely to attend preschool than White children, they may experience lower-quality care. (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005). According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), families (1 adult and one child) with modest incomes (less than $40,000) have the least access to preschool education (Barrett &Yarosz, 2007). Dramatic increases in both enrollment and quality of prekindergarten programs would help alleviate the school readiness gap and

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ensure that low-income and minority children begin school on even footing with their peers. (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005). The evidence in favor of investing in early childhood education as a means of closing the achievement gap is strong (Magnuson & Waldfogel, 2005). Early childhood programs can have a positive and long-lasting impact on the academic achievement of low-income and minority students. (Carolina Abecedarian study1972, Child-Parent study 1986, HighScope Perry Preschool study,1962; Campbell & Ramey, 1995; Reynolds, 1997).

Children's Literature and Social Development

Picture books articulate cultural and social norms to a young child. Children's literature can be used to explore and develop appreciation for cultural differences (Rasinski & Padak, 1990). Norton (1990) observed that in addition to providing enjoyment, multicultural literature benefits children from an ethnic minority group by allowing them to identify with and feel proud of their heritage, thus boosting self-esteem and recognition of the commonalities such as needs, emotions, dreams, and fears shared by all ethnic groups.

A story may have more than one interpretation because different readers bring different cultural backgrounds, experiences, knowledge, values, beliefs, personalities, and perspectives to the transaction with the text (Cai, 2002; Langer, 1995; Rosenblatt, 1938). The reader's ethnic background and culture play a large part in his or her comprehension and engagement with a literary text, which in turn affects learning (Cai, 2002; Langer, 1995; Rosenblatt, 1938). McGlenn (2001) argued that young children in particular see

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themselves as the "center of the world" and "want to see themselves and their everyday lives in the stories they read" (p. 50).

Children as young as the age of three notice race and have attitudes and opinions around color, gender and the elderly (Horowitz, 1939, Lasker, 1929; Minard, 1931; Phinney & Rotheram, 1987; Ramsey 1991; Valli, 1995).   Multicultural literature engages the reader on people from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious groups (Canales, Lucido & Salas, 2002). Young children need to be able to make connections between the picture book story and their everyday lives. Picture book stories can provide children with a sense of affirmation about themselves and their culture and this ability to relate to characters and situations in books can be a major factor in book selections (Colby & Lyon, 2004). Young children of various ethnic groups need to read about characters that reflect their everyday lives (Colby & Lyon, 2004). Male ethnic characters that are represented in stories should be portrayed as authentic and believable (Colby & Lyon, 2004).

Multicultural Education

Gulifoyle (2015) investigated the presence of people of color and White people as protagonists in a sample of recently published children's picture books. What Gulifoyle found was that there is a lack of picture books about people of color, and that it is reflective of colorblind ideology which denies children of color the opportunity to find themselves in books. She feels that this is a social justice issue that must be discussed in the context of White privilege and colorblind ideology. She proposes that the

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underrepresentation of people of color in picture books is a social injustice for all children. Picture books are valuable tools for transmitting community and family values about ethnicity, race, culture and equality to children during their formative years. (Harlin & Morgan, 2014).

According to Nieto (1996), multicultural education, defined in a sociopolitical context, is a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, linguistic, religious, economic and gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers represent. Multicultural education permeates the curriculum and instructional strategies used in schools, as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and parents, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning. Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change, multicultural education promotes the democratic principles of social justice (Nieto, 1996).

Nieto's seven basic characteristics of multicultural education are:

    1. Multicultural education is antiracist education.

    2. Multicultural education is basic education.

    3. Multicultural education is important for all students.

    4. Multicultural education is pervasive.

    5. Multicultural education is education for social justice.

6. Multicultural education is a process.

7. Multicultural education is critical pedagogy (pp.307-380).

In the US, the demand for multicultural children's picture books has increased as the diverse population in the US has increased. Critical theorists McCarthy and Crichlow (1993) point out that members of minority groups in the United States tend not to have central control over production of images of themselves. According to Critical Race Theory, bias and cultural misinformation are present in children's literature in part because people outside the mainstream are not the ones creating the images. Members of the dominant culture are creating representation based on their own mistaken assumptions of what the "others" are like (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Multicultural literature focuses on people from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious groups (Canales, Lucido& Salas, 2002).

Multicultural Literature

Literature performs two functions: to entertain and to instruct. Educators and parents are particularly concerned with its function of instruction and put a premium on the moral values of children's literature, because it transmits images, ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and values that will be consciously or unconsciously, absorbed by the impressionable young readers (Cai, 2002, p. 109). Authors who create multicultural literature for children and young adults make "a move in the direction of culture maintenance or culture change" (MacCann, 1998, p. xiv). Anyone who is concerned with their cultural correctness (Cai, 2002).

Multicultural picture books can be used as a tool to engage the children and offer a view of diversity in the story filled with characters from other ethnic groups (Canales, Lucido & Salas, 2002). In order for a multicultural picture book to do the culture justice, the characters should be authentic, not stereotyped (Canales, Lucido & Salas, 2002). The characters must reflect the distinct cultural experiences and views of the specific group that is being portrayed (Diamond & Moore, 1995).

The images children enjoy and understand from picture books have a powerful impact on their sense of self and their view of others. Books reflect appearances, relationships, thoughts, and feelings (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). In particular, multicultural literature offers minority children opportunities to see themselves in the materials they read (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). Books also act as windows, giving children an opportunity to look outside of themselves to see another person's perspective or another group's worldview (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). By engaging young children in reading and voicing their thoughts around the story within the book, they develop familiarity with, understanding of, and respect for the range of human characteristics, which include differences in age, gender, ability, race and culture. When children do not have the direct experiences of a group, they are particularly vulnerable to stereotypes and bias in society and in books (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). When children experience books that show unfamiliar people dealing with issues or emotions they can identify with, they are able to relate to the characters and begin to gain a sense of common humanity (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005).

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Awareness of ethnicity develops as young children observe attributes such as skin color, hair texture, and facial features. Three and four year-olds are aware of racial differences and are beginning to develop attributes about the differences (Goodman 1952; Katz 1982). They may begin by expressing distrust or fear of people who are different. Child development research demonstrates that by the age of ten children's attitudes toward race are formed and are very resistant to change (Goodman 1952; Katz 1982).

Children's picture books are excellent ways to introduce children with the many ways that people live throughout the world, thus introducing them to the concept of culture (Tauren, 1967 & Kuperus, 1992). Teaching culture involves providing accurate depictions of the lives of different groups of people (Tauren, 1967 & Kuperus, 1992).

Children's picture books that feature characters from diverse cultures help children become accustomed to the idea that there are many languages, points of view, and ways of living (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). Picture books that focus on human beings from around the world, help children to recognize that all people need nurturing, food, clothing and shelter; tell stories, dance and sing; and make things that are useful and beautiful and do so in different and interesting ways (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). Picture books can help children to develop the capacity for empathy through identifying the feelings of others (Taylor, 1976, Lamme & McKinley, 1992). They may then realize that they sometimes feel the same way as the characters in the picture books (Taylor, 1976, Lamme & McKinley, 1992).

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According to Freeney & Moravcik 2005, preschool and kindergarten children start to recognize what feelings are appropriate in different situations and to recognize that they have feelings and so do others. Young children slowly grow to understand that the views and feelings of others might be different from their own and that two people might react differently to the same situation (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). Later on in the child's life he or she learns that two different emotions can be felt at the same time about the same situation (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005).

Walking in someone else's shoes can help a child to develop a greater capacity to empathize with others (Lamme & McKinley, 1992). Through picture books, children may become aware of problems in society and that not all children's lives are as secure as theirs may be. Hearing stories about these experiences helps them to become more sensitive to problems in society and in the lives of others (Lamme & McKinley, 1992).

Lamme & McKinley suggest that children's picture books guide young children to cope with everyday life problems and extraordinary crises. Issues in children's lives raise strong and often troubling and confusing feelings. Picture books can help children learn that they are not the only ones who have ever experienced an event or feeling, and can model ways to think about and act on a problem. This understanding can extend to the problems of others when a child identifies with a sympathetic character (Lamme & McKinley, 1992). Picture books can support the development of values such as cooperation, generosity, kindness, compassion, and interdependence, and provide models

of positive ways to relate to others and solve problems (Taylor 1976; Berg-Cross & Berg-Cross 1978; Black, Seeman & Trobaugh 1999).

Children's picture books that young children enjoy deal with the interests and issues in their lives. The characters and plot are communicated in ways with which the children can identify (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). A well written children's book has well-developed characters who change as a result of life events and a well structured plot with enough engaging conflict and suspense to hold the child's interest (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). Picture books that have a positive impact on children's attitudes portray people with respect for their humanity and explain why they feel and act as they do (James, Kormanski & Kormanski, 1999). Literature that does this reflects the children's backgrounds and experiences and also portrays different races, cultures, abilities, lifestyles, and economic backgrounds (James, Kormanski & Kormanski, 1999).

In addition to inspiring a love of reading and providing hours of enjoyment, children's picture books provide emotional, social, intellectual, linguistic and literary purposes (Temple, Martinez, Yokota & Naylor, 2002). Picture books can also help children to understand their own experiences, can validate their own culture, provide information about other cultures, encourage empathy, and inspire imagination (Temple et al., 2002). Boutte, (2002) asserts "the power of literature to affect the lives of young children is awesome and far-reaching" (p. 147).

The Anti-Defamation League position on children's books is that they have the potential to create lasting impressions. Not seeing themselves, and the groups to which

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they belong, represented in books can make children feel devalued. But, when picture

books contain heroes and experiences to which children can relate, they set the scene for

fostering children's positive self-concept and respect for diversity Anti-Defamation

League, 2005). Picture books should not speak to a limited group of children; they should

speak to all children. Picture book collections in early childhood programs should serve

as "mirrors" that reflect the children, staff and families in the program and "windows"

that reveal the true diversity of the world (Anti-Defamation League, 2005). The Anti-

Defamation League suggests that taking the time to build picture book collections that

represent all cultural groups equally will help convey to children that all people are

valuable (Anti-Defamation League, 2005).

The Portrayal of African-American/Black Characters in Children's Picture Books

In an article titled "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors," Rudine Sims

Bishop (1990) wrote:

> Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or
> imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and
> readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever
> world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are
> just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human
> experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own
> lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then,
> becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books
> (p. ix).

Picture books with African American/Black cultural content benefit all children; it

is especially beneficial to African American/Black children. The inclusion of this content

not only provides a way for them to recognize their cultural heritage, it also creates opportunities for them to develop a sense of identity (Collier, 2000).

The publication of African American/Black children's literature shows, that the percentage of published books for children depicting African Americans/Blacks increasing and decreasing, often dependent on the social and political conditions in the United States. In addition to a fluctuation in the number of picture books published, the manner in which African Americans/Blacks are portrayed has changed. Leonard Marcus, an editor and author who has chronicled the effects of social and economic changes on children's books, proposed: "in every generation, children's books mirror the values and aspirations of the people who make them" (Marcus, 2004, p. 17).

Towards the end of the 1960s, picture books for children that Sims (1982) classified as culturally conscious began to emerge, consisting of "books that reflect, with varying degrees of success, the social and cultural traditions associated with growing up Black in the United States"(Sims, 1982, p. 49). In addition to African American/Black main characters, the major characteristics of culturally conscious literature include "a story told from the perspective of Afro-Americans/Blacks, a setting in an Afro-American/Black community or home, and texts which include some means of identifying the characters as Black – physical descriptions, language and so forth" (Sims, 1982, p. 42). African American/Black picture books for children increased and included many outstanding books by African American/Black authors and illustrators (Sims, 1982, p. 42).

During the 1980s "culturally conscious" literature emerged, which Sims(1982) describes in her landmark study, *Shadow and Substance: Afro-American Experience in Contemporary Children's Fiction*. Sims is a researcher known for her work on the portrayal of how African Americans/Blacks are represented in children's picture books. She has written numerous articles about the impact that multicultural literature has on children and has been influential in the field of African American/Black children's literature for many years.

By the early 1990s, less than 2 percent of books published were about African Americans/Black, a decrease from about 20-30 percent in the 1970s. The number of picture books published in the 1990s was lower than published in the 1970s, over time picture books provide more positive portrayals and illustrations and according to (Johnson & Mango, 2004): feature: "African Americans/Black engaged in activities unique to their cultural experiences" (p.131). Cameron et al. (1992) describe culturally conscious literature as "positive images of African Americans/Blacks in their home, in the community, and at work showing characteristics of people living normal everyday lives. They see and hear themselves, their relatives and friends, and can form opinions about who they really are" (p. 32).

Increasing diversity in schools in the 1990s raised awareness that people of color were not well represented in children's literature (Pavonetti & Cipielewski, 2004).

According to Bishop:

Modern African American/Black children's literature, published since 1965, was created in part to fill a void, to ensure that African American/Black children

would not continue to be virtually invisible in children's books. It was also created to counteract the popular misrepresentation of African American/Black people that had been prevalent in children's books for most of the 20th century. Moreover, it was created because African American/Black writers and artists had a strong desire to tell their own stories and create their own images (Bishop, 2012 p. 90).

Walking in someone else's shoes can help a young child to develop a greater capacity to empathize with others (Lamme & McKinley, 1992). Picture books with African-American/Black cultural content benefit all children; the content is especially beneficial to African American/Black children (Collier, 2000). It not only provides a way for them to recognize their cultural heritage, it also creates opportunities for them to develop a sense of identity (Collier, 2000).

The Portrayal of Latino Characters in Children's Picture Books

According to the 2010 United States Census, the Hispanic/Latino population is the fastest growing culturally diverse group in the United States. With a population of 313,914.040, the Hispanic/Latino population makes up 16.9% of the overall United States population. Persons under the age of five years comprise 6.4% of the United States total population (United States Census, 2010). This means that the children of Hispanic/Latino heritage are becoming more visible in our early learning classroom environment. Teachers must be aware of their presence and add materials such as picture books in their classrooms to reflect their student population.

Children of color in the United States make up about 40% of the population, though recent statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center show a lack of diversity in children's books. Out of 3,600 children's book titles published in 2012,

CCBC found that only 3.3% of the books were about African-Americans/Blacks, 2.1% were about Asian-Americans, 1.5% were about Latinos and a mere 0.6% were about American Indians (Cooperative Children's Book Center, 2012). A survey of 113 early childhood teachers showed that the majority of them could not recall any titles of children's books featuring Native-American/American Indian, Asian-American, or Latino-American characters; only 53 could identify two titles of children's books that contain African-American/Black characters (Brinson, 2012). A primary goal in early childhood programs is to welcome and embrace the diversity of children and families in today's multicultural society (Brinson, 2012), and children's books provide a wonderful way for children to learn about diversity and fairness (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2012). To avoid "distorted mirrors and windows," be sure the picture books contain accurate representations of other cultures and remember that no single book can adequately portray one particular group's experience (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

The Portrayal of Native American/American Indians, First Nations or Native Alaskans

Americans who identified themselves as Native American/American Indians or Alaskan Natives make up over two percent of the U.S. population according to the 2010 census. Guilfoyle suggests that if one believes that representation should be based on population, Americans would seem to have enough picture books about American Indians. She continues by stating that members of the tribal nations are concerned with

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providing their children with titles in which they can identify themselves (Guilfoyle, 2015).

At a workshop conducted by the researcher about children's literature she asked the mostly White audience about how they felt about introducing picture books that were about characters of color. The early childhood teachers agreed that there was a place in their library that included picture books for their students to read. The researcher mentioned that they must include picture books about Native Americans/American Indians in their library, after all they did live on the land first. After a break, the researcher found a note that said, "Thank you for mentioning my people, we are a lost population in the eyes of the world". This statement brought tears to the researcher's eyes. Guilfoyle goes on to say,

> "We provide children with portrayals of American Indians that focus on their historical role, but don't include enough exposure to who American Indians are today" "It is clear that the U.S. education system is not going to take on introducing children to authentic, contemporary American Indians during their preschool and early grade-school years. It is not a priority and it never has been. If educators and parents want non-native children to learn about contemporary American Indian children through picture books, they'll have to make concerted efforts to find and purchase the few titles in existence" (2015).

The Portrayal of Asian Americans in Children's Picture Books

Asian American's make up 5.1% of the total United States population of 313,914,040 according to the 2010 United States Census. According to the 2010 Census there are more than 14.7 million Asian-American in this country. Despite this fact, only a small percentage of the children's trade books published focus on this group. For example, Lee & Low books stated that only 1.5% of all children's books published in

1997 were about Asians and/or Asian-Americans, and (Bucher & Manning, 2006) reported that out of 5000 books published in the year 2002, only 91 were by and about Asian-Americans. The two main influences for this increase are its use as a vehicle for helping children understand and cope with complex decisions and the renewed educational focus on authentic stories for literacy and language development (Ayala, 1999).

Even though representation remains problematic, the quality of Asian-American children's literature has improved over time (Loh, 2006). In Harada's (1995) study of the portrayal of Asian-Americans in picture books, she found that 90% of the books had positive and non-stereotypical portrayals, and 80% of the books had proactive characters. Thus, increasing the quantity and quality of Asian-American children's literature may help to increase their visibility, counter prevailing stereotypes, and provide positive images and role models (Loh, 2006). According to Bishop (1992), multicultural literature is a "vehicle for socialization and change." In schools, texts, including literature, textbooks, etc., are used to disseminate knowledge and to produce and reproduce society (Mehan & Robert, 2001).

The lack of adequate representation of Asian-Americans is detrimental to all of our students in that: (1) The proliferation of degrading stereotypes dehumanize the history, lives and experiences of Asian-Americans, which fosters racism and prejudice; and (2) the absence or silencing of insider perspectives marginalizes Asian-Americans, which encourages cultural separatism (Willis-Rivera & Meeker, 2002).

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According to Higgins, there is a need for a reliable and research-based tool that is germane to Asian-American children's literature. Picture books continue to be published and circulated that are not authentic and teachers and other consumers may not have the tools to assess good literature that reflects cultural authenticity. If such books continue to be circulated, then the authentic books will continue to go unrecognized. It is also important to note that one authentic book is not enough; we need a substantive collection (Higgins, 2002; Washington Office, 1996).

Male Portrayal in Children's Picture Books

The role of schools has become more prominent in the lives of children younger than five years of age (Sales, Spjeldnes & Koeshe, 2010). Many children spend up to 10 hours a day in child-care (Grafwallner, Fontaine, Torre & Underhill, 2006). Picture books offer an avenue by which families influence how children learn about gender. Picture books can familiarize children with valued traits and personal characteristics. Fiese and Skillman (2000) reported several storytelling patterns that can lead children to develop gender-typed traits and values:

- Sons were more likely to be told stories of autonomy and achievement.

- Daughters were more likely to be told stories of relationships or support.

- Fathers more often told stories of mastery and success.

- Mother's stories were usually a direct expression of emotion. (p. 280).

The main characters in picture books provide role models and definitions of masculinity and femininity for children (Jackson, 2007). Children are active and critical

readers, and books and their illustrations become a cultural resource for children to learn social norms (Jackson, 2007).

According to the Cooperative Children's Book Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2013) 57% of children's books published each year have male protagonists, versus 31% with female protagonists. In popular children's books featuring animated animals, 100% of them have male characters, but only 33% have female characters. The average number of books featuring male characters in the title of the book is 36.5% versus 17.5% for female characters (Cooperative Children's Book Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (2013).

Men and boys are represented in children's literature more often than women and girls. Barnett (1986) performed a content analysis on over 1,500 children's picture books and found that illustrations of boys greatly outnumbered illustrations of girls. Heintz's (1987) study, in an attempt to update the work of Weitzman et al. (1927), found that males were pictured twice as often as females in the illustrations of 14 Caldecott-medal winning books from 1971 through 1984.

A study conducted by Allen, Allen and Sigler (1993) examined 13 Caldecott Medal and Honor books from 1938 to 1940 and 9 Caldecott Medal and Honor books from 1986 to 1988, in recognition of the Caldecott Medal's 50th anniversary. Allen, Allen and Sigler (1993) found that female and neutered illustration, characters, and verbal references in the books increased in 1986 to 1988 period; however, males still outnumbered females in all categories of representation.

Another study conducted by Narahara (1998) randomly studied 20 books that four kindergarten teachers chose to read aloud to their class. While the number of female book authors was greater than male book authors, male characters outnumbered female characters significantly in central roles and somewhat in secondary roles (Narahara, 1998). Illustrations of males were twice as likely as illustrations of females (Narahara, 1998). Hamilton et al. (2006) examined 30 Caldecott winners and also critiqued 170 bestselling children's picture books from 1995 to 2001. The study found that males still significantly outnumbered females in book titles, as main characters, and in pictorial representations. Male authors were more likely to write about male characters, but female authors wrote about characters of both genders. The study also found that the Caldecott books were more likely to under represent females than non-award-winning books.

Gooden and Gooden (2001) indicated that male adult characters were described as being in almost twice as many occupational roles as females adult characters in children's books. The authors also indicated that although many of the female character roles were still traditional, a few non-traditional roles, such as a doctor or a chef, showed up in the picture (Gooden and Gooden, 2001). Most adult male characters were not observed doing housework or childrearing activities, although a few male children performed non-stereotypical activities, such as doing the laundry (Gooden and Gooden, 2001). Hamilton et al. (2006) found that male characters were much more likely to be shown as having an occupation, and of the female characters with an occupation, only two were presented in

non-stereotypical jobs, whereas male characters had a much broader spectrum of occupations/careers.

Anderson and Hamilton (2005) studied 200 award-winning and bestselling picture books from 1995 to 2001 to assess the role of the father character in children's literature. Mothers were 50% more likely to be present in books than fathers. Mothers were twice as likely to be depicted nurturing children. Barnett (1986) noted that boys were more likely to be shown in helpful roles and that they were also more likely to be the recipients of help. McDonald (1989) also observed that males were more likely to help others and receive help than females.

Adult male and boy characters appear to be a rigidly stereotyped as female characters, sometimes even more so, in children's picture books. Massad (1981) reported that girls receive high peer approval when they demonstrate both feminine and masculine behaviors, but that boys generally only receive approval for masculine behaviors.

Summary

Children's picture books introduce young children to the many ways that people live throughout the world, thus introducing them to the concept of culture (Tauren, 1997 & Kuperus, 1992). Preschool age children need to be exposed to picture books that focus on human beings that help them to recognize that all people need nurturing, food, clothing and shelter; tell stories, dance and sing; and make things that are useful and beautiful an do so in different and interesting ways (Freeney & Moravcik, 2005). Research indicates that children's literature impacts student achievement and social

development. Diversity of cultures and lifestyles represented in children's literature

would help children connect to story and might help them empathize with people who are

unlike them.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Background and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the representation and depiction of boys of color in children's picture books within early childhood classrooms. The study examined the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in children's literature within the early childhood classroom. The study also explored how males of color were represented as characters in children's literature in the classroom libraries.

This study addressed the following two questions:

RQ1: What is the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in children's literature within early childhood classrooms?

RQ2: What is the representation and depiction of males of color in children's picture books?

Rationale for Qualitative Design

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings,

and memos to the self (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). A qualitative content analysis was the method selected to interpret the "messages encoded in the communication product" (Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007), p. 288). The content analysis process included selecting a sample of artifacts to study, developing procedures to classify the data, coding the data, and interpreting the results (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). Content analysis asks, "What can be learned about this phenomenon in question by studying certain documents?"(Ary et al., 2010, p. 31). The phenomena in question are the racial, ethnic, and gender images in children's picture books in classrooms.

Population and Sample

The sample was composed of ten community-based early childhood classrooms who were all Qualistar rated in an urban county in Colorado. These early learning center's students will attend one urban school district in the state. Eighty community early learning sites that offered early childhood educational services to children were invited by email (Appendix A) to participate in the study. The first ten early childhood classroom teachers that responded to the email were included in this study. All of them signed a Consent Form (Appendix B) and a Classroom Profile Survey (Appendix C).

Qualistar Colorado and its Qualistar rating team partner with early childhood programs on the assessment phase of their quality improvement effort. Evidence of a high quality early learning experience can be found in many aspects of a program

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(Qualistar Colorado, 2012). Strong family partnerships, age-appropriate learning experiences, positive interactions between teachers and children, effective health and safety procedures, and the ongoing training and education of the program staff are just some of the critical areas that contribute to the quality of care provided to children and families. The Qualistar rating system was developed in 2000 with input from approximately 50 early childhood educators and advocates (Qualistar Colorado, 2012). Qualistar Colorado has rated licensed family child-care homes, for-profit and non-profit center-based programs, stand-alone Head Start and Early Head Start programs, public school-based preschool programs, and faith-based programs across the state of Colorado (Qualistar, 2012). The Qualistar rating is a biennial rating and is therefore certified for two years. However, some funders prefer that the programs they fund for ratings and targeted quality improvements receive an annual rating (Qualistar, 2012).

Qualistar rated programs are evaluated on five different quality components, including: family partnerships, training and education of the staff, the learning environment, adult-to-child ratios and child group size. The early childhood center can receive a one to five star rating, with one assessed as the lowest rating by the rater and five stars as the highest rating (Qualistar, 2012). The ten early learning centers had ratings from three star (seven centers had this rating, two centers had a four star rating and one center had a five star rating) A Qualistar rater provided the following information about what she looks for in the classroom libraries. The rater indicated that they look for a variety of picture books that are in the following categories: various races, cultures,

ages of characters from infants to grandparents, disabilities of characters and non-gender specific roles. She indicated that the classroom library only needs one or two books in each category to score a rating of a four or five. To put this in perspective if a classroom has five Black boys and four Latino boys then the library only has to have two books with Black characters and two books with Latino characters for the boys to read. The picture books also do not necessary to have male characters as protagonists.   In a classroom with all White children the library should have one book that represents each ethnic category. The rater said that she has had teachers say to her that they do not have any diversity in their classroom make up so why should they have picture books that reflect people of color.

Research Design

Each classroom was a unit of analysis for the descriptive part of this study, and the total sample of picture books with male characters of color was the unit of analysis for the content analysis. The first level of analysis was the school and classroom context. The researcher collected classroom demographic data and information about the acquisition, value, and use of multicultural picture books in the classroom from each teacher.

The second level of analysis consisted of a count of picture books within each classroom library. The researcher examined the covers of the picture books and sorted them into one of two categories: representation of non-White characters or representation

of only White characters or no human characters. Counts of these categories were recorded for each classroom.

The third level of analysis consisted of a critical content analysis of picture books with male characters of color.   In addition to the content analysis the title, author, illustrator, copyright, description of main and secondary characters, and brief description of the story was recorded for each book.

Data Collection

The first part of this study provided context about the teacher and the composition of the class through the completion of the teacher classroom profile survey (Appendix B). The survey contained questions about the early childhood teacher (gender and ethnicity) and the early childhood classroom demographic make-up of the students.

The next phase of research consisted of site visits to the early childhood classrooms. The picture books in the early childhood classroom environment were counted to provide the aggregate of picture books in the classroom. The picture book collections were disaggregated by picture books with male characters and then White male characters and non-White characters. The early childhood teachers also provided a count of all the male students and their ethnicity in the classroom survey. The researcher sorted the picture books into two stacks: male character on cover and no male character on the cover. The books with males on the cover were counted and grouped by ethnic background for the content analysis. The researcher utilized this selection process because children select picture books by the cover, and the focus of the study was male

representation in picture books. The total number of non-White males and White males

in the early childhood classrooms was then compared to the total number of picture books

with male characters of like minority grouping (African American/Black, Latino, Asian

American, Native American/American Indian and Middle Eastern) and White characters.

The researcher then conducted a critical content analysis of picture books with non-White

male representation.

Data Analysis

The forty-three picture books with male characters of color were the subjects for

the critical content analysis. The researcher first analyzed the male characters' roles in

the stories and then used the Mendoza & Reese (2001) framework based on critical race

theory to analyze each book. The initial analysis included an examination of the

relationships among power (main or secondary character), role (traditional or non-

traditional), and ethnicity (African-American/Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino,

Native American/American Indian/Alaskan, Middle Eastern, or Biracial). The researcher

used the questions that Mendoza & Reese (2001) developed to guide the critical content

analysis of the characters within the multicultural stories. Doing so allowed the

researcher to search for significant cultural information and identify stereotypical

representation. The researcher also used the Internet to research the authors and

illustrators of the picture books. The Mendoza & Reese (2001) guide to the critical

content analysis of characters in multicultural picture books allowed the researcher to

analyze each story through a lens of race theory. This framework was not designed for

the analysis of picture books so the researcher modified it by eliminating questions that were not appropriate. The questions, "What are the consequences of certain behaviors? What behavior or traits are rewarded, and how? What behaviors are punished, and how?" were omitted because picture books did not have the depth of characterization or range of diversity to conduct this analysis. The questions, "How is language used to create images of people of a particular group? How are artistic elements used to create those images?" were also omitted due to the limited language and reliance of pictures. The researcher also modified the questions, "What do this narrative and these pictures say about Race? Class? Culture? Gender? Age? Resistance to status quo" to focus on the relationship of the content of the picture book to dominant culture (White, two parent family, single family home and heterosexual)   The researcher pulled quotes and details from the picture books that corresponded to the questions in the data collection tool below.

	Book Title	Book Title	Book Title	Book Title	Book Title	
Are characters "outside the mainstream culture" depicted as individuals or as caricatures?						
Does their representation include significant specific cultural information? Or does it						

follow stereotypes?					
Who has the power in this story?					
What is the nature of their power, and how do they use it?					
Who has wisdom? What is the nature of their wisdom, and how do they use it?					
Who has written this story? Who has illustrated it? Are they inside or outside the groups they are presenting? What are they in a position to know? What do they claim to know?					
Whose voices are heard? Whose are missing?					
What do this narrative and these pictures say about dominant culture?					

Limitations

      The study included a questionnaire and a content analysis of the picture books. Then ten participants allowed the researcher to thoroughly study the picture books that were available in their classrooms. The early learning centers and preschools were randomly selected. The common bond that they all shared was that they are all Qualistar Rated. These schools were not a sample of a larger population and the results cannot be generalized. Each classroom had picture books not only in their classroom library and in different centers within their classroom environment. The teachers were aware of this study and it is impossible to know whether or not they stocked their libraries with multicultural picture books before the researcher arrived to their classroom to conduct this study.

      Another limitation is found in the questionnaires. The early childhood teachers all answered that they agreed or strongly agreed that multicultural picture did have value in their classroom but some classrooms did not have picture books that matched the demographic male population in their classroom.

      Finally, although this researcher interpreted data cautiously, and used Critical Race Theory as a guide, subjectivity was still an issue. Strides were taken to read the data several times, and to analyze the picture books and the questionnaires for accuracy. In so doing, it was possible to limit the assumptions or misperceptions on the part of the researcher.

Chapter 4: Results

The study examined the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in

children's literature within ten early childhood classrooms. The study explored the

differences between how minority and White males were represented as characters in

children's literature, focusing on how males were characterized in picture books relative

to roles and ethnicity. The relationship between the demographic population of the

classroom and the proportion of picture books with minority male representation was also

explored. The following research questions frame the presentation of the results.

RQ1: What is the proportion and range of ethnicity and gender displayed in children's

literature within childhood classrooms?

RQ2: What is the representation and depiction of males of color in children's picture

books?

Background

The researcher began this study by selecting the first ten early childhood

classrooms that responded to an email that was sent out to eighty early childhood

teachers.   Then a classroom profile was created that included a count of the total students

and the gender and racial composition of each classroom. Authors and illustrators of

children's literature use illustrations on the cover of the book to get young children to pick up their books and read them. Book covers will often show the main character of the story so that the child will know what the book is about without reading the title of the picture book. This researcher looked at each cover of the book to determine whether the picture book was evaluated to make sure that a male character was portrayed as the main character of the book. The contents of each classroom library were examined and sorted by the pictures on their covers, then catalogued for the number and type of picture books. All picture books with male characters on the cover became the sample for analysis. These books were counted and sorted into two categories, White male characters and male characters of color. The researcher conducted a content analysis of the picture books with male characters of color with special attention to roles and distribution of power. The researcher also surveyed the teachers with a questionnaire about the purpose for multicultural picture books in their classroom libraries.

School and Classroom Context

The researcher visited the ten early childhood classrooms over a span of 12 weeks during February-April of 2015. A demographic profile was created for each classroom. The table below shows that the composition of the ten classrooms is relatively balanced

Table 1

Classroom	Teacher Ethnicity	Teacher Gender	Number of Students	Number of Girls	Number of Boys	Boys of Color	% of Boys of Color
1	Black	Female	15	8	7	7	100%
2	White	Female	19	9	10	5	50%
3	Black	Female	14	8	6	6	100%
4	Hispanic	Female	16	9	7	6	86%
5	White	Female	13	4	9	9	78%
6	White	Male	26	12	14	1	7%
7	White	Female	21	8	13	1	15%
8	White	Male	15	9	6	6	100%
9	White	Female	18	6	12	2	17%
10	White	Female	17	11	6	2	33%

regarding gender, with 86 females and 88 males. There are more males of color and

White males in the total population of the study. All of the males in Classrooms one,

three and eight are males of color. Classrooms one and three have Black female teachers

while classroom eight has a White male teacher. Over 50% of the males in classrooms

four and five are students of color, and classroom two had 50% of males are who are

students of color. The teacher in classroom four is Hispanic while the other two teachers

are White. Classrooms six, seven, nine and ten all had fewer than 50% of males that are

students of color, and all of the teachers were White. The distribution of males of color

in the early childhood classroom varied from 100% (classroom 1) to less than 10%

(classroom 6).

Table 2

Male Student Racial Composition

Classroom	Total # of Boys	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian American	Native American	Bi-Racial
1	7	0	3	3	0	0	1
2	10	4	4	0	0	0	1
3	6	0	1	4	0	1	0
4	7	1	2	3	0	0	1
5	9	2	4	4	0	0	1
6	14	13	1	0	0	0	0
7	13	11	0	0	0	0	1
8	4	0	1	5	0	0	0
9	12	10	0	0	1	0	1
10	6	4	1	0	0	0	1

The male student racial composition in the graph was collected from the teachers through an information sheet filled out by each teacher. There were a total of 88 males in the ten early childhood classrooms: 45 of the males are White, 17 are Black, 19 are Latino, 1 is Asian American, 1 is American Indian/Native American and 7 are Biracial.

Graph 1

Males by Race and Classroom
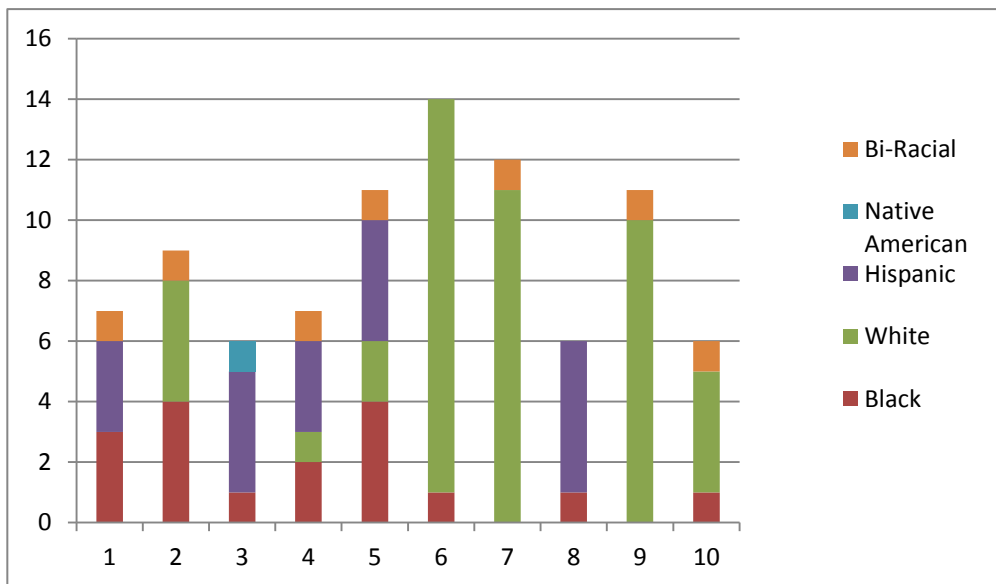
Graph 1 shows the males represented in the early childhood classrooms. Classroom one has Black and Latino representation of males. Classroom two has Black and White males. Classroom three has a large number of Latino males. Classroom four has a larger count of Latino males. Classroom five has a larger count of Latino and Black males. Classrooms six, seven, and nine have the highest count of White males and Classroom eight has a high count of Latino males. Classroom ten has a high count of White males.

Graph 2

Male Characters by Race and Classroom
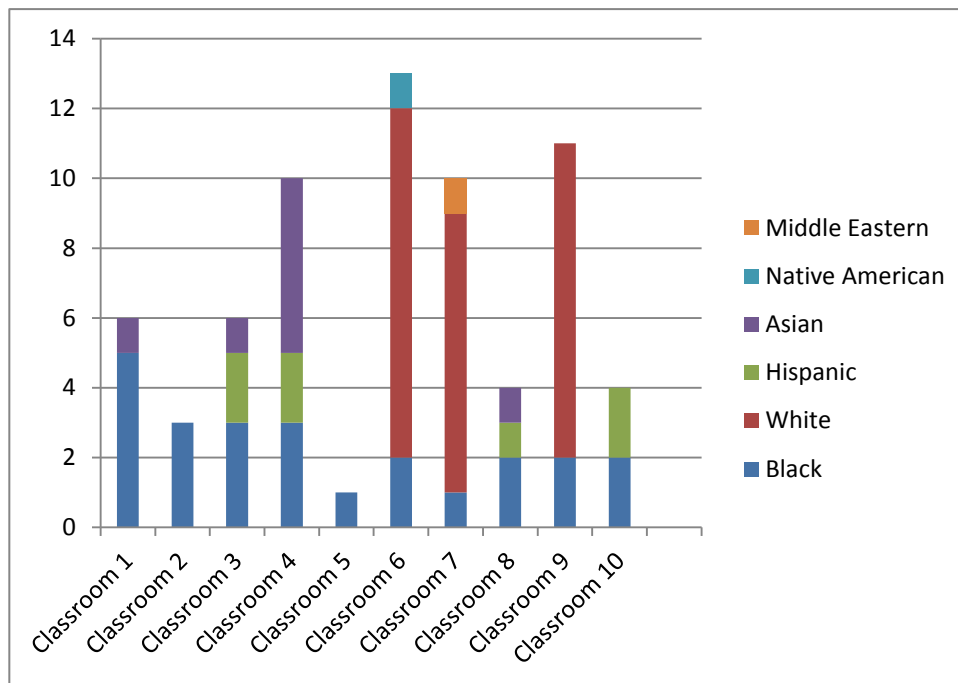
The male characters in Graph 2 show how the picture books are distributed among the ten early childhood classroom libraries. Classrooms one, two, three and four have the highest count of picture books with Black male characters. Classrooms three, four and ten have the highest count of Latino male characters. Classroom four had the highest count of books with Asian characters. Classrooms six, seven and nine have high count of White male characters in the picture books. Classrooms eight and ten have high counts of Black male characters in picture books with classroom ten also showing an equal amount of Latino representation of male characters in their classroom library.

Classroom Libraries – Aggregated Findings

An inventory of the libraries in the early childhood classrooms in ten early childhood

centers revealed a total count of 1,194 picture books within the ten classroom libraries.

There was considerable variation regarding the total number of picture books in each

classroom with a range from 50 – 219. Out of these 1,194 picture books only 70 had male

characters depicted on the cover of the book and out of the 70 books with male characters

on the cover, 43(39%) of the picture books depicted male characters of color. The

following table presents the racial composition of the books with male characters of color

organized by classroom.

Total Number of Boys in EE Classrooms

	Color
Black	17
White	45
Hispanic	19
Asian	1
Native Am.	1
Biracial	7
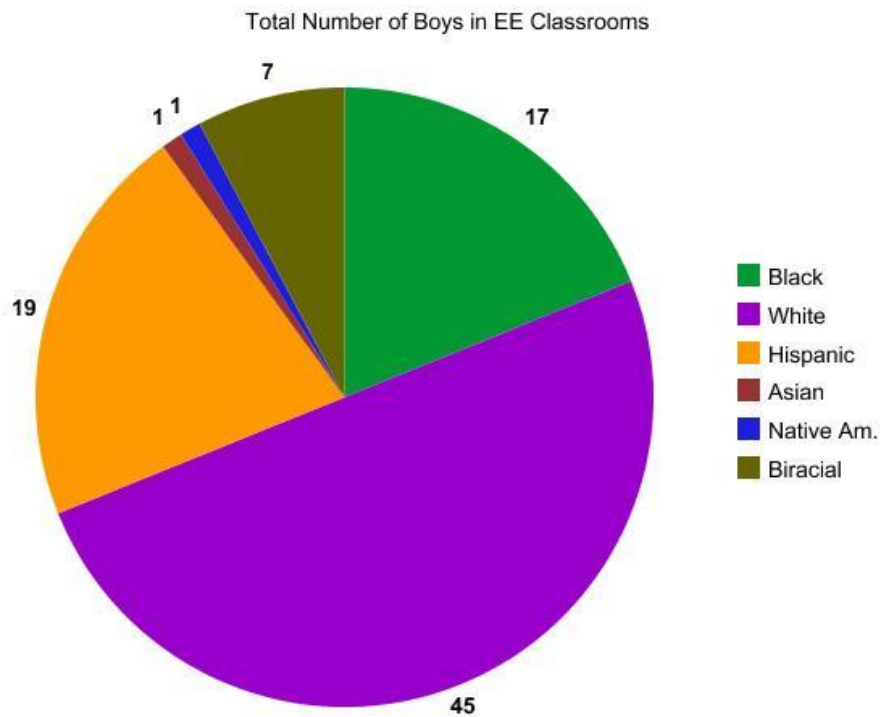
This pie chart shows the number of total number of males across the ten early childhood classrooms. N=88 number of males were counted in this study. 51% were White, 19% of males were African American/Black, 2% were Latino, 1% was Asian American, 1% was Native American/American Indian, and 8 percent% were identified as Biracial.

Total Number of Books with Male Lead Characters by Ethnicity
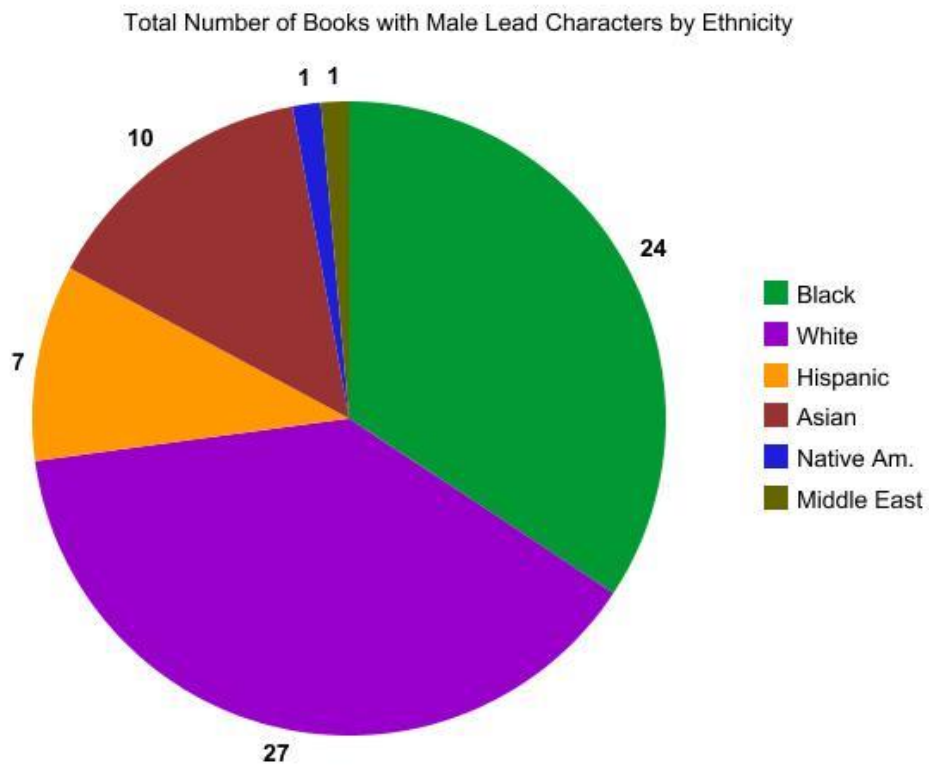
This pie chart shows the racial composition of male characters in the 70 picture books with male characters on the cover. 43% of the picture books had ethnic male characters. The ethnic breakdown of the classrooms was 39% White, 34% African

American/Black, 14% Asian, 10% Latino, 1% Middle Eastern, and 1% Native American/American Indian.

A comparison of the aggregate demographics of the classrooms with numbers of picture books with male characters disaggregated by race/ethnicity reveals the following ratios (number of students by race/ethnicity: number of picture books with male characters by race/ethnicity): White 45:27, African American/ Black 17:24, Latino15:7, Asian 1:10 and Native American/American Indian 1:1, biracial 7:0, Middle Eastern 0:1.

Overall, the representation of picture books with ethnic male characters is lower than the number of males in all racial categories with the exception of African American/Black and Asian male characters.

Director and Teacher Perceptions

The researcher asked the center directors about practices regarding the selection and numbers of picture books for classroom libraries. The center directors mentioned a few reasons for how they decide when to display and where to put the multicultural books. The classrooms varied in the total amount of books that they had in their classrooms due to a number of reasons. One reason is that the early childhood teacher rotates the books according to thematic curriculum. The picture books are selected for each center based on the curriculum for the month, which leads the researcher to an understanding that the curriculum drives what types of picture books are selected and not the demographic of the students in the classroom. Another reason for the variance in the amount of books is the allotted space in the classroom. Storage is an important factor and

while some classrooms had generous amounts of storage space for many picture books other classrooms stored their books in hallway closets or storage sheds outside their classrooms.

All ten early childhood teachers agreed (20%) or strongly agreed (80%), that having picture books with characters that depict different races, cultures and ethnicities are valuable in their classroom library. However, they varied in their statements of purpose and the amount of time spent reading multicultural picture books to their students.

Among the teachers there was general agreement regarding the need for multicultural literature and that the early learning centers purchased picture books for the classroom library. However, there were differences regarding the stated purpose for multicultural literature in the classroom. These responses ranged from articulation of the purpose of multicultural picture books to statements of general importance and fit with the composition of classroom curriculum.

For example, six of the teachers responded that multicultural picture books would give students a "different experience of different cultures." Responses also ranged from the early childhood teachers believing that multicultural picture books are extremely important in the classroom library, to teachers believing that they cannot find multicultural picture books that fit their curriculum of the month or theme. One early childhood teacher felt that he has neither enough multicultural picture books to read to his students, nor that he has enough early reader multicultural picture books for his students

to look at and read. Another teacher felt that her school does not promote multicultural

children's picture books and literature enough to ensure more of this type of literature is

present in the libraries of all the classrooms in her center. Center directors and teachers

were at a loss as to where to find quality multicultural picture books. According to

Mendoza & Reese, (2001), the possibilities of using good multicultural literature in the

classroom can be educational, and teachers can feel overwhelmed by the prospect of

finding and evaluating the books. They do not want to offend anyone, nor do they want

to harm any of the children they teach, and they worry they might inadvertently select

and share inappropriate books (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

Statistics show that, nationally, the majority of young women and men in early

childhood teacher programs are European American, disproportionate to the diversity

their classrooms will present (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). These future teachers are likely

to come from environments that did not provide the opportunity, the necessity, or the

tools for critical thinking about constructions of difference, bias, and race. They may

believe that they do not "have culture"—that "culture" is an attribute of marginalized

groups (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

The Latina female teacher in classroom four provided a detailed account of why

multicultural picture books are important in the lives of the early childhood student.

"These books are important to show children of any race and ethnicity that it takes all

cultures of people to discover and create everything that we have in our world," she said.

She continued, stating that "teachers need to understand by using multicultural picture

books in the classroom, that they are giving the students information that will be lifelong knowledge and useful in everyday interaction with all people" (personal communication, April 13, 2015). This teacher went beyond statements of the importance of multicultural literature to a rationale of how multicultural literature impacts young children's learning and preparation for a life in a diverse society. She makes sure that this literature is present at all times in her classroom.

Teachers were also asked questions about how they acquire picture books for their classroom libraries. Eighty percent of the teachers responded that they purchase picture books with their own money. Twenty percent of the teachers responded that they do not purchase picture books for their classrooms. This indicates that all types of picture books are important to the 80% of the teachers who spend their own money to build their libraries.

All ten of the early childhood teachers responded affirmatively that the early learning center purchased books for their classroom library. The teachers' responses to the last question revealed their articulated value about the need for picture books to have characters that depict different races, cultures and ethnicities. Twenty percent of the teachers responded that they agreed with the question and 80% of the teachers responded that they strongly agreed with the question.

The early childhood teachers were asked to identify the frequency that they read multicultural picture books to their students. Forty percent of the teachers responded that they read multicultural picture books to their students on a monthly basis. Thirty percent

of the teachers responded that they read multicultural picture books weekly and 30% of

the teachers responded that they read multicultural picture books daily to their students.

The researcher found that 60% of the early childhood teachers read multicultural picture

books weekly if not daily to their students. The teachers and directors articulated

understanding that children of color value stories where the characters look like them.

They noted that these picture books peak the child's interest in looking at and reading the

books in the classroom library.

Although all 10 early childhood teachers either agreed (20%), or strongly agreed

(80%), that having picture books with characters that depict different races, cultures and

ethnicities was valuable in their classroom library, they varied in their statements of

purpose and the amount of time spent reading multicultural picture books to their

students.

In addition to the survey, the researcher made observations during the visits to the

classrooms.   One White male teacher smiled and said that he kept all of his picture books

about other cultures, races and ethnicities in a box that was located high on a shelf out of

the reach of his students. He brought out the box and handed it to the researcher. The

box was full of picture books with a variety of cultural and ethnic character portrayal.

There were picture books about France, Germany and Africa. A Chinese folklore book

that one White male child indicated that he liked it when his teacher read that book.

In another center, the center director when she saw that the researcher was Black,

immediately apologized that they did not have a diverse staff, every few students of color

and very few picture books that depicted characters of color. She was aware that they did not have any picture books with characters of color but she did not give any impression that she would make an effort to purchase more picture books with characters of color for her White preschoolers to read and discuss.

After all the picture books were inventoried, the researcher took the sample of picture books (43 out of the total 70 picture books) that depicted males of color and analyzed the role, position in the story, and race indicators described from the Mendoza & Reese framework (2001). The following graphs and sections present the findings from this content analysis. For the purposes of this analysis, the researcher is using the term "traditional view of the male" as the male is the breadwinner and the female as the homemaker. (Lease, 2003) and non-traditional as stay at home fathers and working mothers. Traditional work and family roles have recently undergone significant changes (Lease, 2003). Brescoll and Uhlmann (2005) investigated attitudes toward nontraditional parents in the United States. The researchers found that stay-at-home fathers and employed mothers were evaluated more negatively than stay-at home mothers and employed fathers (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005). Perceived social regard was lowest for stay-at-home fathers. For employed mothers, perceived social regard was just as high as for traditional parents, which may be attributed to gaining social respect and regard by taking on the traditionally male breadwinner role (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2005).

Out of the 70 picture books reviewed, 62 picture books had male characters portrayed in traditional roles, and the following graph depicts the representation by ethnicity.

Traditional Male Characters in Children's Picture Books
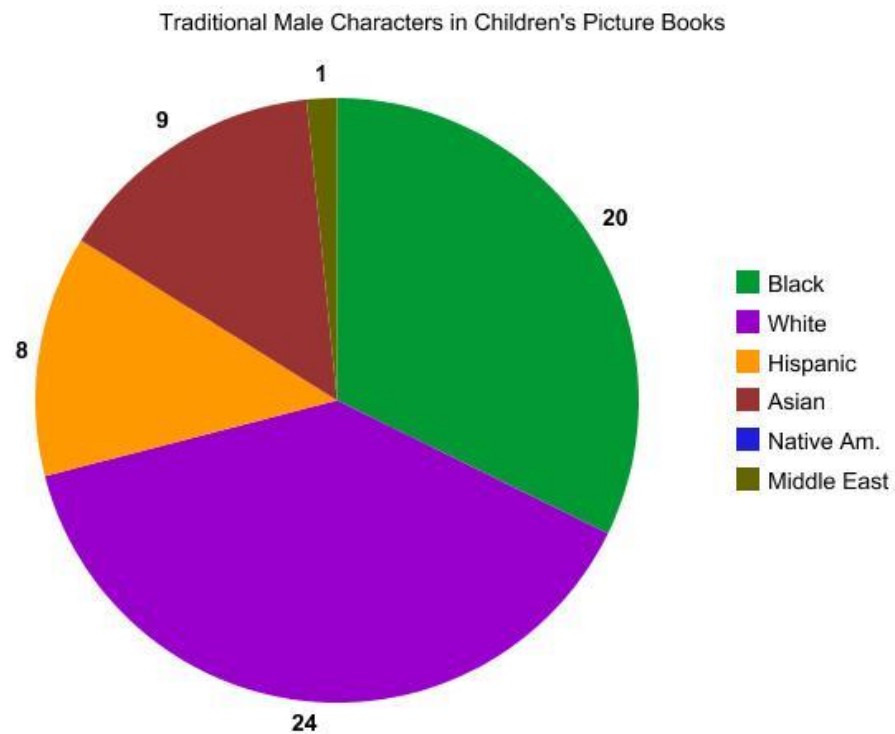
An example of a traditional male character was seen in the picture book, *Gunner The Football Hero* (2010), This, is a story about a White male character living with both his mother and father who wants to play football. Gunner did not look like a football player because he was short and round. Gunner wanted to be the quarterback. His parents did not like football but they supported their son by signing him up for pee-wee football. Gunner sat on the bench for many of the games until the end of the season, when the quarterback was hurt and Gunner was called to play. Gunner went into the game and

threw the ball long and steady. He and his team scored three touchdowns in the last game

of the season. The fourth time that Gunner threw the football it was intercepted and the

other team won. The coach gave Gunner a trophy for Rookie of the year. Gunner's team

called him a hero. Another example was seen in the *Big Snow* (1998). David is a young

Black male who is at home with his mother, he wants to go outside but his mother keeps

him busy indoors with different chores. After his nap, David finds that his father is home

from work and the entire family put on their coats to go out in the snow for a walk. The

father has a traditional role, and the son is characterized as more non-traditional. The

picture book, *Hamid's Surprise* (1996), depicts a Malaysian male who is in school. He

shares with his classmates about his trip to his homeland of Malaysia. With the use of a

map and photos that he took, Hamid shows his classmates the house where his

grandparents live, and the farm where they raised food and cared for the animals.

All of these examples show males living in traditional families with traditional

interests and lifestyles. There were fewer picture books that portrayed males in non-

traditional roles. Only eight books had males in non-traditional roles and the following

graph depicts the ethnic background of non-traditional characters.

Non-Traditional Male Characters in Children's Picture Books
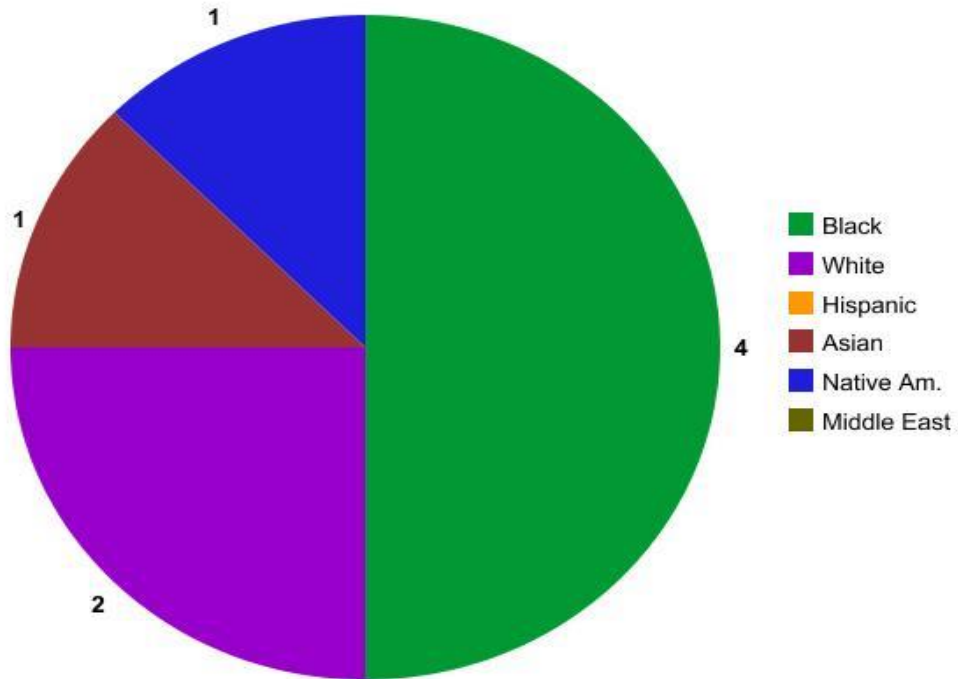
Roland Humphrey is Wearing a What? (2012) addresses a transgender White male character named Roland. A group of females tell Roland that he cannot wear a shirt with pink stripes on it. They tell him that he should wear gray, brown, blue or green. Those are the colors for a little man. Roland did not want to wear those colors. His parents told him that he could wear anything that he wanted. The next day Roland wore more manly clothes to school but he added a shiney butterfly pin on his sweater and a blue barrett for his hair. The females again tell Rowland that he was not wearing the right outfit for a male. Rowland can't understand why females can wear anything from dresses to pants and males can't wear pink or ruffles. The next day Rowland arrives at

school in a dress, necklace and a tiara and announces to his classmates that this is who he

is and his real friends won't care. The females say that they are sorry and accept

Rowland and his outfits. This book portrays a clash between traditional and non-

traditional roles for boys. According to Barthel (1994) the masculine gender role

emphasizes power; due to this gender role, products advertised for men are shown in

conjuction with images of power. Fugita (1974) found that individuals with high status

and power received more visual attention than their peers. The character's function

ranking according to Goffman (1979) is the determination of when an actor takes the

executive role. This role is displayed by position of characters, occupation, giving

service to another, teaching, leading, height, and dictation of the activity (Goffman 1979).

As noted in the literature, power is associated with gender. The following graph depicts

the racial representation of boys who were characterized as capable of being powerful

and successful. Out of the 70 picture books that depicted males as powerful or successful

characters in the story, none of the picture books showed any of the males as

unempowered or unsuccessful in completing a task or a goal.

Empowered Male Characters in Children's Picture Books

1 1
10
24
8
26

Black
White
Hispanic
Asian
Native Am.
Middle East
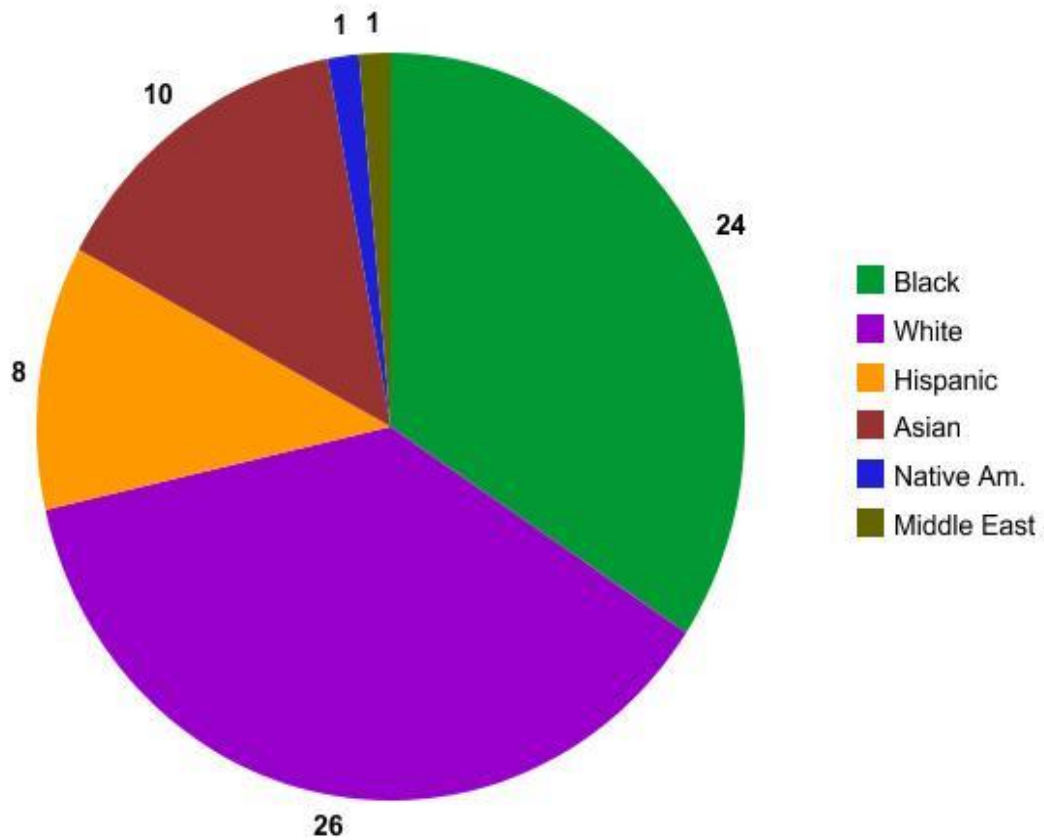
In the picture book *Grandfather and I* (1994), a young, preschool-aged Black

male and his Grandfather take walks. The Grandfather walks slowly and the young male

likes that because he does not have to run to keep up. During their walks, Grandfather

points out and explains different things to the young male. They look at leaves, flowers

and other types of nature. When they arrive home from their walk, Grandfather sits in his

rocking chair with the male child in his lap and reads a storybook to him. The

Grandfather teaches the young male about nature through their walks and further he

builds literacy skills by reading to him. The young male is empowered by an adult who

spends time with him by sharing nature and reading books that lead to a bond of love and trust. In the story *How to Do Well in School* (2007), a young Latino school aged male talks about the importance of eating a good breakfast, which will help you to do better in school. The Latino male in the story tells the reader to study, use the library, and ask teachers for help when it is needed. He sees himself as a college graduate and someday a Mayor of the city.

Sixty-two of the 70 picture books examined revealed male characters that were depicted in traditional and empowered roles. There were no real differences regarding race with the exception that three times as many of the males depicted in non-traditional roles were males of color.

Critical Content Analysis

In addition to the roles of male characters, the researcher analyzed the books through the lens of the questions developed by Mendoza & Reese (2001) to guide the critical content analysis of characters based on race theory. The content analysis of these questions is organized in the following sections:

- Depiction of Character – Are characters "outside the mainstream culture" depicted as individuals or as caricatures?

- Cultural Information – Does the representation of these characters include significant specific cultural information? Or does it follow stereotypes?

- Distribution of power and wisdom – Who has the power in this story? What is the nature of their power, and how do they use it? Who has the wisdom? What is the nature of their wisdom, and how do they use it?

- Author's ethnicity – Who has written this story? Who has illustrated it? Are they inside or outside the groups they are presenting? What are they in a position to know? What do they claim to know?

- Voices of characters – How is language used to create images of people of a particular group? Whose voices are heard? Whose are missing?

- Dominant culture – What do this narrative and these pictures say about race, class, culture, gender, age and resistance to the status quo?

- Artistic elements – How are artistic elements used to create those images?

- What are the consequences of certain behaviors? What behaviors or traits are rewarded, and how? What behaviors are punished, and how?

Depiction of character: individuals or caricature. According to the Mendoza & Reese (2001) framework is a question "Are characters 'outside the mainstream culture' depicted as individuals or as caricatures?"

The researcher disaggregated the picture books with ethnic males according to their depiction as an individual or a caricature. According to Isfandyari-Moghaddan & Kashi-Naharji (2010), caricatures play an influential social and political role. Caricatures can illustrate the sufferings of citizens by tackling the issues of the society, analyzing economic problems, and analyzing overall problems. Caricatures can deal boldly with

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social problems because the can escape censorship. It is possible to say that caricatures have the potential to correct problems faster than written words (Hafiz, 2006). Within this sample of picture books, the researcher determined that 43 male characters were depicted as individuals and none of the characters were depicted as caricatures. This determination was made because all of the male characters were authentically human and not distorted or exaggerated to make a social or political statement.

Cultural information. Cultural information was seen in many of the picture books in this study. Howard (1991) argues that an authentic book is one in which a universality of experience permeates a story that is set within the particularity of characters and setting. The universal and specific come together to create a book in which "readers from the culture will know that it is true, will identify, and be affirmed, and readers from another culture will feel it is true, will identify, and learn something of value about both similarities and differences among us" (p. 92). Cultural authenticity has often been defined as the accuracy of the details of everyday life as represented in literature or media (Howard, 1991). If ethics are the moral principles or values held by a culture, one important way to extend this definition is by evaluating whether or not a book reflects those values, facts, and attitudes that members of a culture as a whole consider worthy of acceptance or belief (Short, 2006). Bland (2005) defines gender stereotypes as the behaviors, attitudes, values and beliefs that a particular cultural group considers appropriate for males and females on the basis of their biological sex. Males are usually portrayed in children's books as strong, dominant, adventurous, capable, and

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independent (Bland, 2005). Out of the 24 picture books with Black male characters, four books, or 17%, had characters that depicted cultural significance. Seven out of seven picture books depicting Latino male characters showed that there was no significant cultural information shared through the characters nor was there any stereotype of this group. Ten picture books featuring Asian American males were analyzed and five or (50%) of them depicted cultural information and one or (10%) used a stereotype. One Native American/American Indian male character and one Middle Eastern male character were depicted through a cultural lens when the Native American/American Indian male character painted his tribal activities to preserve the history of the tribe and the Middle Eastern male character tells his classmates about how his baby brother is exposed to a date which is a type of food that the parents give to the baby as a cultural experience at a young age. This analysis indicates a trend that some ethnic groups are portrayed as more mainstream than others. Very few of the picture books with African American/Black male characters focused on their cultural background as something distinct from mainstream culture; however, all of the picture books with Native American/American Indian and Middle Eastern male characters were connected to cultural information. The following are some examples of how cultural information was displayed in the books.

Authors and illustrators have latitude in how they tell their stories, and they also respond to market demands. There was considerable variation across ethnicities and the amount of cultural information that was shared in the picture books examined in this study. Picture books that featured Asian, Native American/American Indian and Middle

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Eastern males had more cultural information than those with Latino and Black male characters. The following are three examples of how cultural information was portrayed. In the picture book, *Nick's New Year* (1999), Nick tells the reader about the Chinese New Year. He says that red is a lucky color for his people and his family go to the Chinese parade and see a dragon, which is a sign of good luck. Nick's parents instill the pride of being Chinese to their children by celebrating Chinese New Year traditions. Another cultural picture book, *Welcome to the World Baby* (2001), depicts a Middle Eastern male character named Tariq who shares with his class about the custom of giving his new baby brother a taste of a date. Tariq tells about this family tradition that the people from his country feed a new baby in their family a date. This sparks a discussion in the class about how other families welcome a new baby into the family. In the picture book *I Can Play Soccer* (2002), Carlos a Latino male, demonstrates to the reader what equipment is necessary to play soccer, a sport associated with Latin culture but also part of the mainstream culture. Then he is dressed to play soccer and shows the reader different types of foot moves in the game of soccer. Carlos shows how to make a goal in soccer. The illustrations show Carlos at home putting on his uniform in his bedroom and then going outside on a soccer field to demonstrate how to play the game of soccer.

These examples illustrate the range of focus regarding cultural information. The books featuring Chinese and Middle Eastern cultural traditions portray the male characters as outsiders, and the focus is on the cultural traditions that make the male

characters different. However, the book with Carlos focuses on the male and the sport and not on his difference with other cultures.

   Distribution of power and wisdom. Who has the power in the story? According to Gadsden (2002) "the media enable those with power to potentially control the choices of others." Media images act as socializing agents that influence our attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviors (Kang, 1997).

   Of the 24 African American/Black male characters, 19 (79%) of them had the power in the story. Ten (52%) of the African American/Black male characters demonstrate how to do something, five (26%) learn a new skill, seven (37%), make a decision, and two (10%) are secure in their family. All seven Latino male characters have the power in the story. One hundred percent of the lead male characters are in the lead role in the story. Three (43%) of the Latino male characters demonstrate how to do something. One (14%) learns a new skill, and three (43%) are secure in their family. Ten Asian American male characters have the power in the story. Of the ten male lead characters, three (30%) of the Asian American characters demonstrate how to do something, one (10%) makes a decision, and six (60%) are secure in their family. The only Native American/American Indian male character demonstrates to the reader how to do something. The only Middle Eastern male character is secure in his family.

   Each picture book was analyzed for the character's power in the story. Of the 43 books that were used for this study, 38 of the books with male lead characters had the power story, whereas the secondary character in five of the picture books had the power

in the story. The power in the stories was depicted by the character giving advice, demonstrating how to do something, solving problems, organizing, or being creative. The secondary characters also demonstrate the same characteristics; however, these characteristics help the main character feel empowered in the story.

In the story *Henry's Freedom Box* (2002), Henry Brown is a slave who grew up on a plantation. He is married and had a family. A new owner took over the plantation and sold Henry's family to another owner and Henry wanted to be free. Henry heard of a doctor who helped slaves to freedom. He ran away from the plantation and found the doctor who had a crate built for Henry with food inside and he mailed Henry to Pennsylvania where Henry was a free man. Henry took control of his life and sought out another man who was a White doctor to help him to freedom. Even though Henry was a slave, he broke racial boundaries to change his life. Another picture book titled, *Bringing The Rain to Kapiti Plain* (1981), depicted an African male named Ki-pat who was a shepherd taking care of his cows. His land was rich and green for many years. One year the rain did not come and the land was turning brown. Ki-pat turned to the sky and hoped for rain. An eagle dropped a long feather to Ki-pat, who used his bow and arrow and shoot the feather into the storm cloud and brought rain back to the Kapiti Plain. Ki-pat had the power to bring rain back to his plain.

Who has the wisdom in the story? According to Schoch (2010), wisdom books are those books, which are used to teach a lesson, most often about character. Wisdom books have their place in the classroom as teachers struggle to help students understand (and

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incorporate) the very abstract notions of responsibility, determination, integrity, cooperation, respect, loyalty, and empathy. In the 24 picture books depicting African American/ Black male characters, thirteen (54%) demonstrate wisdom in the story. Three (23%) of the Latino male characters in the seven picture books demonstrated wisdom in the story. Asian American male characters were depicted in ten picture books with three (30%) demonstrating wisdom. The Native American/American Indian picture book depicted a male character with wisdom. One of the books within the research covered wisdom in a picture book titled *I Am Honest* (2003). The male character is Asian American and he demonstrates how to be honest by always telling the truth, doing his own school work, following the rules, and not blaming others for his mistakes. Out of the 43 picture books analyzed, 20 male main characters were depicted as having wisdom and 23 secondary characters were depicted as having wisdom. Male characters were never portrayed from a deficit perspective.

Author's ethnicity. Is the author inside or outside the groups that they are writing about? Out of the 24 picture books depicting Black male lead characters, 16 (66%) of the authors are outside of the group that they write about, whereas only eight (33%) are within the African American/Black population that write about. Three (12%) of the seven Latino picture books are written by authors outside the group they are writing about and four (16%) are written by authors who are Latino. Of the ten picture books depicting Asian American male characters, eight (80%) are written by authors outside the Asian American population whereas, two (20%) are written by Asian American authors.

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The one Native American/American Indian picture book was written by a non-Native American author and the Middle Eastern picture book was written by an author who is Middle Eastern. Only ten authors (23%) were inside the group that they wrote about and 33 (77%) were outside the group that they wrote about. Ezra Jack Keats who is a White Jewish male author who won the Caldecott Medal in 1963, for his book *The Snowy Day* (1962).   The main character in the book is an African American/Black male named Peter. Keats's inspiration came from a photo of an African American/Black male in the Life magazine (erza-jack-keats.org). He wrote the following about writing a book with a African American/Black kid as a hero: "None of the manuscripts I'd been illustrating featured any black kids—except for token African Americans/Blacks in the background. My book would have him there simply because he should have been there all along" (ezra-jack-keats.org). By the time of his death, Ezra had illustrated 85 books and written and illustrated 22 children's classics (ezra-jack-keats.org).

Voices of characters. Whose voices are being heard in the story? Within the picture books, the characters have a voice. The 43 picture books analyzed the main character's voice and it was depicted 25 times with the secondary characters voice depicted 18 times in the picture books. Twenty (83%) of African American/Black male voices were the main voices heard throughout the stories. The Latino male character's voice was heard in six (25%) of the seven picture books analyzed. The Asian American, Native American/American Indian and Middle Eastern male character's voice were dominant in all of the picture books that featured them.

The following are examples of male characters having and not having a voice. *The Bus for Us* (2001) is a picture book about an African American/Black male and his little sister who are waiting for the school bus. Tess, the little sister, watches as each truck or car passes the bus stop and she asks her brother Gus if that is the school bus. He tells her the names of the trucks that pass, for example: a fire truck, a garbage truck, and a tow-truck. Then the school bus finally arrives he says to Tess this bus is for us. In the picture book *Full, Full, Full of Love* (2003), a young African American/Black male named Jay-Jay visits his grandmother and helps her clean up the house and set the table for their Sunday family dinner. Grandma's voice guides Jay-Jay on how to prepare the dinner and set the table. She and Jay-Jay then wait until the other family members arrive for Sunday dinner. Grandma's voice instills in young Jay-Jay what it means to keep family close with weekly gatherings.

Dominant culture. Employing the Mendoza & Reese (2001) guide to the critical content analysis of characters in multicultural picture books allowed the researcher to analyze each picture book through a lens of dominant culture by race, class, culture, gender, age and resistance to the status quo.

Twenty-four picture books depicting African American/Black male characters were analyzed for dominant culture status. Twenty-one (87%) were middle-class and three (13%) were lower-middle class. The class information ranged from two Black males living in Africa in villages to males living in the inner city and yet others living were in a neighborhood with houses and schools.

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In the picture book, *My Brother Charlie* (2010), an African American/Black family has twins. One is a male named Charlie and the other is a female named Callie. Charlie is diagnosed with autism and Callie and her family work with Charlie to help him speak and feel loved in their family. The book shows the family in a house, going to the doctor's office in a car, and Charlie going to preschool. Another picture book, *Tomatoes To Ketchup* (2003), demonstrates how a young African American/Black male and his mother make ketchup from tomatoes through a step-by-step process of preparing the tomatoes, cooking them and then putting the product into jars. The story shows a nice kitchen where they cook, and mom and son are dressed in aprons and demonstrate their skill. *My Daddy's Favorite Ball* (2012) depicts African American/Black fathers and their sons playing with different types of balls. Illustrations of a young African American/Black male catching a ball from his father and then throwing it to his grandfather in their backyard gives the reader a sense that playing ball is a generational skill learned from one male family member to the next.

Several picture books, *The Snowy Day* (1964), *Hi Cat!* (1970), *A Letter to Amy* (1968), *Whistle for Willie* (1964), which are part of a series written by Ezra Jack Keats. All of these picture books dealt with African American/Black characters named Peter, Amy, or Archie who all lived in an apartment building located downtown in a large city. The characters appear in each other's stories and they all have a stay at home mother who nurtures their development. The fathers are mentioned or illustrated but do not play a major

role in these stories. It is interesting to note that these stories written in the 1960's depict a different socioeconomic class for African American/Black families.

Seven picture books depicting Latino male characters were analyzed, and six (86%) represent dominant culture values and one (14%) represented an alternative lifestyle. In one of the picture books depicting a Latino character, *It's Not Fair!* (2004), the character, Charlie, is not happy that it is not his turn to go to Mexico with his mother. Charlie has three other siblings and their mother will take only two at a time to Mexico during spring break. Charlie was able to go last time but wants to go again. His siblings, two sisters and a brother, decorate Charlie and his brother's bedroom with Mexican artifacts and the flag. Charlie's mom explains that he can go next time. This picture book depicts a family of six living in the suburbs in a three-bedroom house.

In another picture book titled *Papa and Me* (2008), Papa is a single Latino father raising a young son. They live in an apartment and take the city bus for transportation. The story illustrated a family culture through papa cooking breakfast, spending time in a city park and going to visit grandma and grandpa.

Ten Asian American picture books were analyzed and eight (80%) reflected dominant culture values and two (20%) were not of the dominant culture value. One Asian picture book, *Cleversticks* (1991), depicted a preschool aged male named Ling Sing who has difficulty doing some of the skills that his classmates can do, such as tying his shoe, buttoning a shirt, or zipping up a coat. Ling Sing knows how to use chopsticks and takes pride in showing his classmates how to hold and eat with chopsticks. This picture book

shows that Ling Sing cannot do other tasks in the classroom well but he can use chopsticks and has the ability to teach his classmates how to use chopsticks too. The father picks up Ling Sing from preschool and tells him that he and his mother are proud of him. The story indicates that there is a two-parent household and that they send their son to preschool. In another picture book that depicts Asian lifestyle, *Nick's New Year* (1999), Nick and his sister and their parents live in a house that they are decorating for the Chinese New Year. The illustrations show a living room, kitchen, and the outside of their house in the suburbs. The family enjoy the parade downtown were the Chinese community awaits the lucky dragon who is last in the parade. The Native American/American Indian picture book represented history, and the Middle Eastern picture book represented the dominant culture. Overall, of the 43 picture books analyzed for class, 84% were dominant culture.

Artistic elements. Artistic elements were analyzed in the illustrations and the researcher was mindful of how each ethnic group was represented in the picture books. The characters were analyzed for a realistic look. Mendoza & Reese (2001) write about the illustrations of Native American/American Indian characters. Several illustrations, including the cover, show Native people as partially transparent, ghost-like figures. "In contrast, the blue-eyed boy on the cover looks solid and lifelike, as does a group that appears to be a modern European American family at the end of the book" Mendoza & Reese (2001, p. 8).

"In combination with the fact that all Native people are represented in historical traditional rather than contemporary clothing, this portrayal suggests that Native Americans/American Indians, in contrast to European Americans, no longer exist as a viable people. They have vanished and are only memories or spirits" Mendoza & Reese (2001, p. 8).

The Native American/American Indian male character in *The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush* (1988) was depicted in a tribe and his contribution to his people was his skill of painting. He painted the daily lives of his people. Though the Native American/American Indian male character did not look like a ghost, he was portrayed in Native American/American Indian cultural clothing, which did not indicate to which tribe he was a member of.

According to Mendoza & Reese (2001), children's picture books have an increasingly significant place in the lives of all children. Sometimes children do not have everyday access to picture books that depict characters of color.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Preschool is the first classroom experience that many three and four year old children will experience before entering kindergarten. The early childhood learning experience should be inviting to the children's sense of real world experiences. Looking at and having books read to them should include having picture books with characters of different races, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. "The achievement gap can be minimized with exposure to high quality pre-kindergarten." (Haskins & Rouse, 2005, p. 4). Children's picture books act as a mirror, reflecting and validating the student's gender and cultural identity. For children of color from diverse backgrounds, these stories are windows into a new realm of experiences (Cox & Cox, 1990).

Data reveal that the achievement of boys in the United States trails that of girls (Zambo & Bronzo, 2009). Most preschool aged boys enter preschool with a willingness to read (Zambo & Bronzo, 2009). However, many of these boys who were so interested in reading in the beginning of the school year soon lose interest because they begin to believe that the reading that they are being asked to complete is boring and fails to connect with their interest and needs (Zambo & Bronzo, 2009). Schools and their teaching staff who help children learning to read have acknowledged the gender gap in literacy and the need to find ways to help all children, especially boys, read better (Gurian, Henley, & Trueman, 2001, p. 59).

Children as young as three notice race and have attitudes and opinions around color, gender and the elderly (Horowitz, 1939; Lasker, 1929; Minard, 1931;Phinney & Rotheram, 1987; Ramsey 1991; Valli, 1995). Multicultural literature focuses on people from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious groups (Canales, Lucido & Salas, 2002). Young children of various ethnic groups need to read about characters that reflect their everyday lives. Male ethnic characters that are represented in stories should be portrayed as authentic and believable (Colby & Lyon, 2004).

The following issues emerged as most significant from the analysis of the data: director/teacher impact and decision making regarding the books selected for early childhood education libraries, the representation of males of color seen in picture books, and the range of diversity within children's picture books.

Director/Teacher Impact and Decision Making

Findings revealed that the director and teacher perceptions impact the composition of classroom libraries, and that they are more aware of the need for picture books featuring non-White characters then they are aware of the need for picture books with male characters.

The directors and teacher's that participated in this study agreed that multicultural picture books were important in their early learning centers. Ten early childhood classroom teachers allowed the researcher to count and read the picture books with male characters of color within their classroom libraries. Three of the teachers, who were female and either African American/Black or Latina, had the highest amount of picture

books depicting males of color in their classroom libraries. All three teachers indicated

that they buy books with either their own money or the allotted monies from the center to

purchase books for their classroom libraries. The seven White teachers realized that they

had a limited amount of picture books with male characters of color, but indicated that

they did not know where to purchase the multicultural picture books. One teacher

indicated that he could not find multicultural picture books that fit his theme of the month

for each month of the year. Another teacher revealed that her center director did not

show an interest in purchasing any books with characters of color. The classrooms with a

majority of White males had the least amount of books with male characters of color.

There did seem to be a relationship between the ethnicity of the teacher and the diversity

of the classroom libraries, and all teachers were aware of a need for multicultural

literature. This awareness ranged from pulling books out of a box to fit the theme of the

month to incorporating literature that will help students understand differences. The

majority of teachers saw multicultural literature as a component of content.

     The results of the demographic analysis of the classrooms and the surveys from

the teachers and directors indicate a relationship between the composition of the

classroom libraries and the ethnicity of the teacher and the demographics of the

classroom. The Latina teacher in classroom four provided a detailed account of why

multicultural picture books are important in the lives of the early childhood student.

"These books are important to show children of any race and ethnicity that it takes all

cultures of people to discover and create everything that we have in our world," she said.

She continued, stating that "teachers need to understand by using multicultural picture books in the classroom, that they are giving the students information that will be lifelong knowledge and useful in everyday interaction with all people" (personal communication, April 13, 2015). This teacher went beyond statements of the importance of multicultural literature to a rationale of how multicultural literature impacts young children's learning and preparation for a life in a diverse society. She makes sure that this literature is present at all times in her classroom. Since children as young as 4-6 years of age are able to recall central features of stories (Lynch et al, 2008) it is important that teachers and center directors review the composition of their classroom libraries to expose children to a wide range of cultures and gender roles regardless of the demographics of the classroom.

Role Depiction of Male Characters in Picture Books

The representation of males of color aligns with dominant culture values and traditional roles for boys and some ethnicities are viewed more through a native cultural lens than others.

Traditional male characters dominated the stories in the 70 picture books in the sample for this study. The family lifestyles depicted in these picture books indicate that families consist of a mother, father, or grandparents who served as role models and authority characters in the stories. Most of the characters in the books lived a dominant culture lifestyle. Non-traditional characters such as single fathers or males who were transgender were not as prevalent in the in the picture books, with one picture book about

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each of these from a total count of 70 picture books. None of the picture books had

female characters as equals or more empowered characters. Empowered male characters

were seen and heard in the majority of the 70 picture books. Cultural information was

portrayed more in picture books featuring Asian, Native American/American Indian and

Middle Eastern characters. There was limited cultural depiction of male characters that

were White, African American/Black and Latino. The White, African American/Black

and Latino male characters were portrayed as assimilated into the American dominant

culture. The results of this study also revealed that of the 45 preschool aged males of

color were counted in this study and there were 43 picture books with male characters of

color. Thus, looking at the wide lens of this study, there was a 1:1 ratio of picture books

with male characters of color for every one ethnic male child in the preschool classroom

overall. Each classroom did have picture books with males of color; however, only 3.6%

of the total number of picture books (1,194) within the ten classroom libraries depicted

males of color. In general males have a limited selection of picture books that represent

them – 70 out of 1,194 books (5.8%).

Content and Themes

The researcher approached the content analysis of the picture books using a

critical race theory (CRT) perspective. An essential tenet of CRT is counter-storytelling

(Matsuda, 1995). Delgado & Stefancic (2002) define counter-storytelling as a method of

telling a story that "aims to cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths,

especially ones held by the majority" (p. 144). Using the CRT, each picture book was

analyzed and evaluated for giving a voice to marginalized groups. "Counter-storytelling helps us understand what life is like for others, and invite the reader into a new and unfamiliar world" (Delgado & Stefancic, p. 41). The researcher looked at dominant culture values, education, family relationships as well as what assumptions the authors and illustrators seemed to make (Giroux & Purpel, 1983; Shannon, 1986; Sutherland, 1985). Using the Internet, authors and illustrators were researched to determine if they were insiders or outsiders to the culture about which they wrote about (Seto, 2003; Sipe, 1999).The researcher analyzed the racial and ethnic identities of the male characters in each picture book and searched for evidence of dominant culture values, education and age (Rodman, 1994).

A majority of authors and illustrators of children's literature are White, and they are from middle-class backgrounds (Nodelman, 1996). As described in the previous section this was the dominant narrative that appeared in the picture books. Of the 43 picture books depicting minority male characters, only ten of the books were written by authors that were inside the race about which they wrote. The other 33 books were written by authors outside the race about which they wrote. The students in the early childhood classrooms were from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and cultures, yet the authors and illustrators more closely reflected the backgrounds of the teachers. As the population becomes more diverse, it is essential that teachers take into account their student's changing backgrounds, needs, and interests, as well as the different cultures and ethnicities that are infusing the classrooms (West et al. 2000).

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The research of the demographics of the male populations of the ten early childhood classrooms showed that there were 45 minority males, of which, 17 were African American/Black, 19 were Latino, 1 was Asian American, 1 was Native American/American Indian and 7 were identified as Biracial. The picture books that were analyzed for this study revealed that 43 books with male lead characters of color had 24 African American/Black male characters, 7 Latino male characters, 10 Asian American male characters, 1 Native American/American Indian male character and 1 Middle Eastern male character. Even though the number of minority preschool aged males (45) and the number of picture books with male minority lead characters (43) indicated a 1:1 match of books to preschool males, the numbers of books with minority male characters varied from one early childhood classroom to another. For instance, seven males were identified as biracial but the research did not reveal any books in the classrooms that showed interracial families raising a biracial male. The classroom that listed that they had a Native American/American Indian male student did not have any picture books about Native Americans/American Indian in their classroom library. Of the 43 picture books that depicted minority males, 38 of the picture books depicted the male character in a middle-class neighborhood, and presented a middle-class perspective or contained some type of middle-class reference. Twenty-one of these books had African American/Black male characters, seven had Latino male characters, nine had Asian American male characters and one was a Middle Eastern male character.   This representation of minority male characters sampled were shown living a life of the

dominant culture but these stories infused a storyline of differences in cultural and ethnic lifestyles.

The identification of the dominant culture was based on whether or not the male character had a home that illustrated the exterior or interior, which included rooms that were illustrated with furnishings, or if the child had his own bedroom. Other indicators of the dominant culture are illustrated by whether or not the exterior of the home showed the neighborhood, the house, and cars. The illustrations show a large kitchen, and living room, separate bedrooms for the children, and a piano, all of which suggest at least a middle-income (Rodman, 1994). Three of the picture books depicted African American/Black male characters as not living in the dominant culture as they were either enslaved or living in villages in Africa. One Asian-American character was a poor and lived in a village and he enjoyed growing flowers. Of the forty-three picture books that had minority male characters, five of the picture books did not fit in the dominant culture perspective meaning they had a more cultural or historical content. The remaining thirty-eight picture books had a reference of minority families living a dominant culture lifestyle.

Along with social class, this study examined the picture books for stereotypes. Five picture books depicting Black male lead characters illustrated stereotypes. Ezra Jack Keats wrote a number of children's picture books in the 1960s and 1970s. His famous book *The Snowy Day* can be found in early childhood classrooms across the US. Keats's Black characters are all of one basic shade of brown with no variation in skin

color. The female characters, generally the mom, are overweight and never leave the house. The facial expressions of these characters are drawn like a cartoon. All of Keats'scharacters live in the inner city in an apartment complex. Keats wrote a number of books including the ones that I found, *A Letter to Amy, Peter's Chair, Hi Cat!,* and *Whistle for Willie.* The same is true for a book about a Hispanic male character titled, *Dreams* written in 1971. The male character's face is simplistic and there is no variation in skin color from one Hispanic character to another. *The Empty Pot* by Demi was written in 1990. This story is folklore about a Chinese boy who grows beautiful flowers. The Emperor of the land asks all the Chinese children to grow a pot of flowers and the most beautiful will become the next Emperor. The characters are dressed in their custom clothing and there is no variation in the look of the characters. Another example is *The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush,* which was written in 1988 by de Paola. This story depicts the Native Americans/American Indians in customary dress and lifestyle. The main character is not a typical brave or warrior. He likes to paint and he paints the events that take place in his tribe. The characters all look alike with their hairstyles and native dress.

When teachers share books with young children, they offer, among other things, exposure to ways of thinking about other human beings. For the child, illustrations and text combine to create particular views of individuals as well as groups of people-complete with messages about what those people are like (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). The critical content analysis of picture books with male characters of color in this study

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indicate that picture books center on one racial group rather than portray diversity within the books. Some racial and ethnic groups also were seen more as representations of culture and as outsiders to mainstream culture. All of the picture books feature male characters of color with positive and productive orientations. None of the picture books analyzed in this study provided a counter narrative. Non-whites were either represented as living in conditions similar to dominant culture America, or representations of an ethnic culture with cultural information included as part of appeal and difference of the characters from dominant culture America.

Implications for Further Research

The implications for future research on multicultural literature in early childhood classrooms are both necessary and meaningful for preschool children. This study took place in an urban setting with a variety of early learning centers and preschools that were Qualistar rated. It would be interesting to conduct research in the early childhood classrooms in a more homogeneous public school district to explore the relationship between the homogeneity of the student demographics to the representation of diversity within the classroom libraries. It would also be interesting to explore the differences among urban, suburban and rural districts. This type of cross case analysis would test the findings of relationships between teacher ethnicity, classroom demographics, and the representation of diversity in classroom libraries. It would be interesting to retrieve a large scope of information from early childhood teachers with regard to their

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understanding of the purpose of multicultural children's literature and the impact the stories have on their students.

There is also a need for researchers to explore the cultural match between the picture books and the students to determine if children are drawn to and enjoy looking at and reading picture books that depict characters of color. Currently, statistics show a significant gap between the reading achievement of White students and the reading achievement of non-White students. More research needs to be done on how multicultural picture books impact how White children and non-White children perceive themselves and their aspirations.

Implications for Teachers, Administrators, and Early Childhood Education Programs

The results of this study propose a need for early childhood teachers and administrators to examine classroom libraries for representation of many types of people who represent racial linguistic cultural ability gender roles. The selections of multicultural books found in the ten sites that participated in the study were limited. The selections of multicultural books that depicted male characters were limited, and in some classrooms there were no books with characters that matched the ethnic identity of the males in the classroom. Professional development on how to choose quality multicultural picture books, where to find them, and how to build an instructional theme around the books, would promote multicultural literacy in the early childhood classroom environment.

Professional development is needed to expose teachers to current children's literature to raise the awareness of both teachers and administrators to the purpose of reading a variety of genres with diverse groups of children, and to expand interest in reading in the early childhood classroom. The research presented here may indicate a pattern of attempting to match the composition of characters in picture books to the demographics of the classroom. This practice does not expose early childhood students to the complexity and diversity of their futures. Teachers would benefit from instruction on the value of reading current multicultural and international literature in their emergent reading classrooms, and how to support higher order responses from young children (Fox & Short, 2003, May, 1995). With this knowledge, teachers and administrators may be able to influence other stakeholders in the early childhood education process, including parents and legislators – all of whom impact the early learning education in a variety of ways.

According to Shannon, 1989; Short et al., 1996; Teale, 1978, the findings of this study should inform early childhood teachers of the potential of having multicultural picture books in their classroom library:

- Recently published multicultural picture books

- Award-winning multicultural picture books

- Books by non-White authors and illustrators

- Books that match the race, ethnicity, and social class of their students

It is important for early childhood teachers to use public libraries and to use their school funds to purchase multicultural picture books for their classrooms (Shannon, 1989; Short et al., 1996; Teale, 1978). These books can be purchased on-line, in bookstores, or through book clubs. Finding these books may take some time and effort but when the student sees himself on the cover of the book, he may be more apt to read it (Shannon, 1989; Short et al., 1996; Teale, 1978). Creating more aesthetic, pleasurable reading experiences is more likely to encourage students to become life-long readers (Shannon, 1989; Short et al., 1996; Teale, 1978).

In Colorado, we need to have a conversation with the authors of the ECERS Rating Tool that the Qualistar rating system uses to increase the number of books with different races, cultures and ethnicities. One book per ethnicity or of a demographic of people is hardly enough in fact it is outrageous that this is acceptable. Our young boys of all racial, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds need to see both themselves and others not like them on the cover of the picture books. If this practice of one or two picture books in each category persist then we will continue to have boys who will not show an interest in reading because they do not have picture books that they can relate to.

Conclusion

Literature performs two functions: to entertain and to instruct (Cai, 2002, p. 109). This study analyzed the picture books that depicted male characters in early learning or preschool classrooms. For children of color from diverse backgrounds these stories are windows into a new realm of experiences (Cox & Galda, 1990). Of the total count of

1,194 picture books only 176 were multicultural and only 43 were multicultural picture books that depicted male characters in the story. Most young boys enter preschool with a willingness to read. However, many of these boys who entered these classrooms so full of enthusiasm in the beginning of the school year soon lose this eagerness because they begin to believe that the reading they are being asked to complete is boring and fails to connect with their interest and needs (Zambo & Bronzo, 2009).

After conducting research in the classrooms, the researcher had an opportunity to speak with the teachers. These instructors were interested in the opinion of the researcher with regard to their picture books. A candid discussion was held about what types of picture books they had, and how to expand their library to include more picture books with male characters − especially minority characters. Several of the teachers indicated that their picture books were selected for what they were teaching that month. One male teacher said that he could not find books that fit his theme for each month and was willing to purchase more multicultural books for his classroom and pay attention to male characters. As a result, the early childhood teachers implicitly marginalized their students' cultures as they made decisions to privilege certain books by reading them aloud and chose not to read books that more closely matched their students' backgrounds and interests (Herrera, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Miller, 2001).

Professional development in the area of multicultural picture books would be beneficial for early learning teachers. Teachers need to know that there are new books written by authors of color that would be a good fit in their classroom library. According

to Mendoza & Reese, when teachers share books with young children, they offer, among other things, exposure to ways of thinking about other human beings. For the child, illustrations and text combine to create particular views of individuals as well as groups of people—complete with messages about what those people are like (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

According to the Anti-Defamation League (2013), while every children's book cannot possibly meet each and every standard of excellence, in many instances, the value of a particular book will outweigh those aspects that might be questionable or problematic. Caregivers should examine children's books for such things as historical accuracy, realistic life styles, believable characters, authentic language, and ensure that the book is age appropriate. The books chosen should also represent a variety of settings, problem-solving approaches, and themes, and should provide opportunities for children to consider multiple perspectives and values (Anti-Defamation League, 2013). Multicultural children's books should not speak to a limited group of children; they should speak to all children (Anti-Defamation League, 2013).

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Appendix A

Email Letter that was sent to eighty Qualistar Rated Early Learning sites that receive funds for picture books from an urban school district.

Dear Center Director:

My name is Katrina Mann-Boykin and I am a graduate student at the University of Denver. My research is about male representation in children's picture books. I would ask for you to contact me if your early learning center is interested in participating in this study.

My email address is Jkatrina.boykin@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time,

J. Katrina Mann-Boykin, ABD
Graduate Student
University of Denver

Appendix B

Informed consent form for Early Childhood Classrooms

Approval Date:January 20, 2015   Valid for Use Through: March 31, 2015

**Project Title: What The Children Are Reading: A Content Analysis Of
                   Minority Male Characters In Preschool Children's Libraries**

**Principal Investigator: Joan Katrina Mann-Boykin
Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Susan Korach
DU IRB Protocol #: 569196-1**

You are invited to participate in a research study about how male characters are portrayed in children's picture books. You are being asked to be in this research study because you are an early childhood teacher that has a classroom environment with a library or literacy area. Your collection of picture books will be analyzed for male character content.

This form provides you with information about the study.Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to take part. If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in this research study that will conduct a content analysis on the portrayal of the male characters in the children's picture books that are available in your classroom environment.

There are minimal risks in participating in this study. The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study; however, you may still experience some risks related to your participation, even when the researcher is careful to avoid them. Risks include… the possibility of some discomfort. You have the right to pause, or completely stop the study at any time as well as to decline to answer any of the questions. Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you agree to participate now, you may change your mind and end your participation at any time. If you decide to withdraw early, the information or data you provided will be destroyed.

This study is designed for the researcher to learn more about how minority male characters are portrayed in children's picture books. The benefit for you as a

participants assisting the researcher with gathering information about how many picture books are in the classroom environment that portray minority male characters. The aim is that these insights will assist the researcher in assessing if there are multicultural picture books in the classroom environment that include male characters and how the male characters are portrayed in the picture books.

There is no compensation available for participating in this study, and you will not be expected to pay for anything related to this study.

To keep your information safe, the researcher will ensure your name is not attached to any reported data; a study number will be used instead. The data will be kept on a password-protected computer at all times. All hard-copy data collected will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home, and will be kept for five years after the completion of the study. At this time, all data will be erased and/or destroyed.

Although the researcher will do everything possible to keep your records a secret, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Also, if you tell us something that makes us believe that you or others have been or may be physically harmed, we may report that information to the appropriate agencies.If we get a court order to turn over your study records, we will have to do that.

The researcher carrying out this study is Joan Katrina Mann-Boykin. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call the researcher at .If she cannot be reached, or if you would like to talk to someone other than the researcher about; (1) questions, concerns or complaints regarding this study, (2) research participant rights, (3) research-related injuries, or (4) other human subjects issues, please contact the Chair of the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, at 303-871-4015, or by emailing IRBChair@du.edu, or you may contact the Office for Research Compliance by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu, calling 303-871-4050 or in writing (University of Denver, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, 2199 S. University Blvd., Denver, CO 80208-2121).

I have read this paper about the study and it has been verbally explained to me. I understand the risks and benefits of this study. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to be in this study; I will get a copy of this consent form.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please Print:

Name:

_____

Phone:

_____

E-mail:

_____

Researchers Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you very much for your interest in this study.

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least five years beyond the end of the study.

Appendix C

Survey of the Early Childhood Classroom Environment

Thank you for participating in my study. Please take a few moments to share some
demographic and background information. You can choose not to take part, and you can
also choose not to finish the survey or omit any question you prefer not to answer without
penalty or loss of benefits. The risks and benefits of completing the survey are similar to
responding to questions about a work related matter. All answers will be handled
confidentially. No program or person will be identified individually.

1. Female_____   Male_____

2. Race: White_____ African-American/Black _____ Latino _____
American Indian/Native American _____ Asian American _____
Other_____

3. Highest Level of Education – AA _____ BA____ MA_____ PhD/EdD_____

   Classroom Background – please provide numeric responses to these
   questions

4. Number of students?_____

5. What is the gender distribution in your class?

Boys _____   Girls _____

6. Please identify the racial composition of students in your classroom

by indicating the number of boys that fit the following racial categories

       a. Black? _____

       b. Latino? _____

       c. Asian American? _____

       d. American Indian/Native American? _____

       e. White? _____

       f. Bi-racial? _____

       g. Unknown _____

Please respond to the following statements to give me a better understanding about how

you acquire books for your classroom library.

1. I purchase books for my classroom library   Yes_____   No_____

    2. My early learning center purchases books for my classroom library

  Yes _____   No _____

Please respond to the following statements.

    1. Picture books with characters that depict different races, cultures and

       ethnicities are valuable in the classroom library.

      1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly Agree

      1. Please identify the frequency that you read multicultural picture books to

        your students.

2. 1. Never   2. Monthly   3.Weekly   4. Daily

Please share your perspective about using multicultural books in your early childhood classroom.

Thank you!

Title of book:

Author of the book:

Illustrator of the book:

Copy Right date:

Lead Character: Male_____

Second Character: Male _____

Description of the story:

Definition of Terms

Asian Americans defined as – Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese.

Children's literature – Both fiction and non-fiction books, written especially for children

0-12 years old.www.pu.edu.tw

Children's picture book – As distinguished from other books with illustrations, is one that

essentially provides the child with a visual experience. A picture book has a collective

unity of storyline, theme, or concept developed through the series of pictures of whichthe

book is comprised.(www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/bookmedia/caldecottmedal)

Critical Race Theory – According to the UCLA School of Public Affairs: CRT

recognizes that racism is engrained in the fabric and system of the American society. The

individual racist need not exist to note that institutional racism is pervasive in the

dominant culture. (www.https//spacrs.wordpress.com)

Culturally Responsive Classroom – A student-centered approach to teaching in which the

students' unique cultural strengths are identified and nurtured to promote achievement

and a sense of well-being about the student's cultural place in the

world.(www.huffingtonpost.com)

Diversity– Individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences)

and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation,

country of origin, physical or cognitive abilities, as well as cultural, political, religious, or

other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning.

(http://www.unh.edu/inclusive/bias-free-language-guide)

Early Childhood Education – (ECE) is a branch of education theory which relates to the teaching of young children (formally and informally) up until the age of eight.(www.en.m.wikipedia.org)

Early Literacy – Comprised of skills and practices that develop in young children starting at birth. **Skills**– print motivation, vocabulary, narrative skills, phonological awareness, print awareness and letter knowledge. (www.library.cedarmill.org)

Intercultural competence – The knowledge, skills, and personal attributes needed to live and work in a diverse world. This includes cultural sensitivity, intercultural communication skills, personal and collective attitudes toward other cultures, and knowledge about other cultures.(www.gvsu.edu/itc/intercultural-competence-3.htm)

Multicultural – Of, relating to, reflecting, or adapted to diverse cultures. (www.merriam-webster.com)

Multicultural literature – Literature about the sociocultural experiences of underrepresented groups. This literature includes those who fall outside the "mainstream" of categories such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and/or language. This literature is written both by those who are members of these underrepresented groups, and also those who fall within the category of "mainstream". (www.library.uni.edu).

Appendix F

Coding for the characters in the books.

African American, Black, African or Afro-Caribbean	Latinos, Hispanic, Mexican, Latin Americans	American Indians, Native American, First Nation, Alaskan Natives	Asians, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders	Whites (not of Hispanic or Latino origin)
Male lead character				
Secondary character				
Informational picture books				
Cultural Picture books				
Folk tale picture books				

Picture Books with White Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
Alexander, Who Used to be Rich Last Sunday	Judith Viorst	Ray Cruz
Applesauce Season	Eden Ross Lipson	Mordicai Gerstein
Apt 3	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
Gunner Football Hero	James E. Ransome	James E. Ransome
I Am The Artist	Dawn Anderson	Kelley Cunningham
I Am Tolerant	Sarah L. Schuette	
I Can't Sleep	Kimberlee Graves	Roseanne Litzinger
It's Hard to be Five	Jamie Lee Curtis	Laura Cornell
Follow The Moon	Sarah Weeks	Suzanne Durancean
Learning to Ski With Mr. Magee	Chris Van Dusen	
Lobster Man	Dahlov Ipcar	Dahlov Ipcar
Louie	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
Louie's Search	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
Love You Forever	Robert Munsch	Shiela McGraw
Mommy's Best Kisses	Margaret Anastas	Susan Winter
Owl Moon	Jane Yolen	John Schoenherr
Roland Humphrey is Wearing a What?	Katrina Revenaugh	

Picture Books with White Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
Sammy and the Dinosaurs	Ian Whybrow	Adrian Reynolds
The Art Lesson	Tomie dePaola	Tomie dePaola
The Baby Sister	Tomie dePaola	Tomie dePaola
The Red Balloon	Albert Lamorisse	P. Goupil
The Snow Lambs	Debi Gliori	
The Trucker	Barbara Samuels	
Tom and Pippo and the Washing Machine	Helen Oxenbury	
Where The Wild Things Are	Maurice Sendak	Maurice Sendak

Picture Books with Black Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
A Letter to Amy	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
Big Snow	Jonathan Bean	
Bringing The Rain to Kapiti Plain	Verna Aardema	Beatriz Vidal
Counting Money	Julie Dalton	Caroline Anderson
Dancing with the Indians	Angela Shelf Medearis	Samuel Byrd
Full, Full, Full of Love	Trish Cooke	Paul Howard
Galimoto	Karen Lynn Williams	Catherine Stock
Grandfather and I	Helen E. Buckley	Jan Ormerod

Picture Books with Black Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
Grandma's Records	Eric Velasquez	Diane Hobbing
Henry's Freedom Box	Ellen Levine	Kadir Nelson
Hi, Cat!	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
I Am Polite	Sarah L. Schuette	
Joshua's Night Whispers	Angela Johnson	Rhonda Mitchell
Max Found Two Sticks	Brian Pinkney	
Martin's Big Words The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.	Doreen Rappaport	Brian Collier
My Brother Charlie	Holly Robinson Peete & Ryan Pete	Shane W. Evans
NFL Superstars Tiki and Ronde Barber Teammates	Robert Burleigh	Barry Root
Peter's Chair	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
Rooftop Mystery	Joan M. Lexan	Syd Hoff
The Bus for Us	Suzanne Bloom	Suzanne Bloom
The Snowy Day	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
Tomatoes to Ketchup	Inez Snyder	Maura B. McConnell
What I Be	Michael Franti	Ben Hodson
Whistle For Willie	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats

Picture Books with Latino Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
Big Kid Shoes	Tori Kosara	Hector Borlasca
Dreams	Ezra Jack Keats	Ezra Jack Keats
How To Do Well In School	Mayor Angel Taveras	Eliza Domingo-Sutcliffe
I Can Play Soccer	Edana Eckart	Maura B. McConnell
It's Not Fair!	Rebecca Gomez	Roberta Collier-Morales
Papa and Me	Arthur Dorros	Rudy Gutierrez
Roberto Walks Home	Janice N. Harrington	Jody Wheeler

Picture Books with Asian Male Characters

Baseball Saved Us	Ken Mochizuki	Dom Lee
Celebrating Chinese New Year Nick's New Year	Rosa Drew & Heather Phillips	Cheryl Noll
Cleversticks	Bernard Ashley	Derek Brazell
Grandpas Are for Finding Worms	Harriet Ziefert	Jennifer Plecas
Hamid's Surprise	Donna Lugg Pape	Kathy Mitter
I Am Honest	Sarah L. Schutte	
On Mother's Lap	Ann Herbert Scott	Glo Coalson
Sam and the Lucky Monkey	Karen Chinn	Cornelius Van Wright & Ying-Hwa Hu
The Empty Pot	Demi	

Appendix G Continued

Picture Books with Asian Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
Wait A Second!	Emily Herman	Melissa Sweet

Picture Books with American Indian/Native American Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush	Tomie dePaola	Tomie dePaola

Picture Books with Middle Eastern Male Characters

Title of book	Author	Illustrator
Welcome to the World Baby	Na'imabint Robert	Derek Brazell